THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 75. PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT No. 726 SANSOM ST. Philadelphia, Saturday, January 4, 1896. FIVE CENTS A COPY. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. No. 27

THE NEW YEAR.

BY WM. MACKINTOSH.

Stranger good morn, for you're a stranger here
And newly knocking at the door.
Ah could we read your unveiled mission clear
And learn what you have got in store.

You carry gladness unto some, we're sure,
What is our lot we fain would know.
Well, hope, suspense will in a measure cure
If you'll no light upon it throw.

We dream you make reply New Year, and say:
For some the future sealed is best
To others better could they see the way
Wanted they'd follow folly with less zest.

Yet, vexing over what it holds is vain
Since all is hid from mortal eye
And if its contents to our view were plain
Then some could sing while others sigh.

But if well used I'll bless you while I stay
Abused then vice versa I'll bestow.
For soon blind folly's tax you'll dearly pay;
Time-wasters reap just what they sow.

I'll grant a blessing surely unto all
Who labor eager, strive and work to earn
Some good from every fleeting moment call
They'll duly harvest in a rich return.

A WAR WITH FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A FATAL MOMENT," "A RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION," "WRECKED," "THE FRUITS OF A CRIME," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

MURIEL GREENBURY was pacing slowly up and down the garden path which ran parallel with the high road. The day had been intensely hot—too hot even for such enthusiastic tennis players as the Greenburys to attempt a game.

Mrs. Greenbury, who had been compelled to go to York on business, had returned at dinner-time utterly exhausted by her day in the hot city. She was resting on the couch in the drawing room now, with Jean, her second daughter, in attendance upon her, while she repeated to Teddy, her only son, the various points of the argument which her lawyer had been explaining to her during the afternoon.

Muriel had heard all the dry details before dinner, and was glad to escape a repetition of them and get out of the house into the cooler air of the garden. The evening breeze came fresh and invigorating from the northeast, through a gap in the line of hills which lay on the north of Quilter's Common.

A mile farther along the road towards Hull the hill-line rose up abruptly into quite a small mountain, called Gillian's Hood, but a little northward of the Pantiles—the name of Mrs. Greenbury's pleasant roomy old house—this dip in the uplands let the cool air from the North Sea blow in upon the patch of country lying directly in a line with it. This the residents thereabouts could well have dispensed with in the winter months, but it had its decided advantages at the close of a sultry summer day.

Muriel was taking the full benefit of this advantage now, as she walked quietly up and down the garden path and watched the fading glories of the after-glow reflected on the wavy outlines of the hills, while the breeze toyed with the fair hair at her temples.

She stopped presently and listened. Yes—it was a horse's footfall coming towards the Pantiles. She went to the farthest corner of the garden, and climbed up on to the bent trunk of an old thorn tree. From there she could see over the hedge a good distance up the road towards York.

Though the village of Quilter's Common was so small that it was doubtful if there were two adult inhabitants in it unknown to each other, Mrs. Greenbury's house, together with the parsonage and Cambray Hall, being built on the high road between York and Hull, a little way out of the village proper, it was possible that the passer-by might be a stranger from one of the small towns in the neighborhood.

On this night, however, fortune favored Miss Greenbury. Before the approaching rider was near enough to be seen, she had recognized the dark horse with the white forefeet as Tryan Cambray's old hack, and she signalled to the young man to stop.

"You're out again," she said, in a manner which seemed to imply a considerable degree of friendliness between them; "then I need not ask if your father is better."

"No," replied Cambray gravely, removing his hat, as if he too enjoyed the cool breeze after the heat of the day; "I should not have left him unless a great change had taken place. It has been a very sharp attack this time. Since the day before yesterday I have scarcely been ten minutes out of his sight, until this afternoon."

"The pain has left him now?"

"Yes; he was asleep when I came away, with every sign of not waking again for hours; so I took the opportunity to get over to Brankesholme. Two of the tenants have been falling out again about their everlasting hedges and ditches." He paused and looked away across the moorland to the distant hill-line, now growing indistinct in the twilight. "How fearfully hot it has been," he continued—"enough to give one a sunstroke! I should like to ride up to the top of Gillian's Hood, and spend the night there in the cool wind."

"Yes," rejoined Miss Greenbury sympathetically—"it would do you good. You must have found it trying, being shut up in your father's room this weather."

"I expect he found it far more trying than I did," said the young man sorrowfully. "However, it's over again now for a time, thank heaven! Any news these last few days while I've been shut up?"

"Oh, yes—great news!" returned Muriel, speaking as if she had only been waiting for a word of encouragement to start her gossip. "Great news for Quilter's Common, at any rate! The American niece that the Misses Gunter have been talking about for the last six months has arrived at last. She came from York by the 6 40 The mother came home by the same train—she has been in York all day, poor dear!—and Teddy drove down to meet her, and saw the new arrival."

"And what is she like?" asked Tryan, looking a little interested. "Is she young or old?"

"Oh, quite young, Teddy says, but rather Yankee in her talk, and awfully pretty! You won't see her prettiness, though, for she is little and dark—brown hair and eyes and brunette skin, with very red lips and lovely teeth. Teddy says her eyes are perfectly splendid—like bits of brown velvet."

Tryan laughed good humoredly.

"Since when has Teddy become such a judge of beauty?"

"Oh, well, of course he has not your mature judgment in such matters!" retorted Muriel, with a touch of sly malice in her manner. "If he had, he would admire only women of a tall commanding figure, with cream-white skins and pearly-gray eyes, and smooth fair hair as glossy as Patsey's coat here!"

Tryan looked down at the girl as she reached across the hedge to stroke the gentle old beast's nose, with a rather puzzled look on his pleasant candid face.

"What do you mean by that, Madame Mystery?" he asked lightly.

"Oh, everybody knows that there is no chance of wringing a word of admiration from you for another girl while Dora Valland is about, with her imposing appearance, and her cleverness and common sense, and her commanding ways! Have you ever noticed how she always seems to throw everybody else into the shade wherever she goes?"

"Good gracious, Muriel," he cried laughingly, "you're not going to entertain me with a diatribe against Dora at this time of day, are you? She and I have been sworn cronies ever since we were both in pinafores. I admire her more than any young woman I know. Yes, I do, Miss Disdain! She's worth half a dozen of you bewitching little frivolities, in spite of your getting a score or so of danglers where she doesn't get one!"

"My dear Tryan," remonstrated Muriel, with a vain attempt to appear dignified, "don't run away with the idea that I am jealous of Dora! As for her not getting danglers, as you elegantly style them, that is her own fault—or rather yours. She would receive any amount of attention if she cared for it; but she shows so plainly that she cares for nobody's admiration but yours that, of course, other men——"

"What on earth are you talking about?" interposed Tryan Cambray, with such very decided annoyance in his tone that Muriel was quite taken aback. "I hope you have never said anything of that sort to anybody else, Muriel; it might get back to Dora's ears—and she'd be very indignant if it did. Dora Valland and I understand each other too well to bother about that sort of thing. Good night! Give my love to Mrs. Greenbury, and tell her my father is on the mend again. Shall look you up some time to-morrow."

Miss Greenbury called out a responsive "Good night" to him, as he cantered off into the dusk of the evening, and clambered down to the pathway again with a very crestfallen air.

Of all the young men of her acquaintance, Tryan Cambray was the last one she would willingly have offended. She could not understand how it had come about. Again and again she had attacked the Rector's stately daughter on the subject of Tryan's devotion, and she had not shown the faintest sign of annoyance, seeming rather, in her dignified fashion, to take pleasure in the insinuation that Tryan and she were lovers.

How, then, Muriel wondered, was she to know that Tryan himself would resent a little pleasantry on the same subject? It was not like him to be so reticent. Nevertheless Muriel felt that she had committed herself grievously, and took herself to task very warmly as she walked back to the house and joined the family circle.

Tryan Cambray, cantering along the mile or so of road which lay between the Pantiles and his father's house, was surprised at his own vexation concerning the trifling incident.

When he approached the parsonage—which lay about half way between Mrs. Greenbury's pretty house and the old Hall, just beyond the spot where the High street of Quilter's Common branched off at right angles from the main road—he saw the lamplight in the drawing room windows; but, though he knew Dora would be there, and though, ten minutes before, the idea of passing without stopping to tell her and the Rector how his father was going on would never have occurred to him, he went straight on, giving Patsey an admonitory touch with his heel when the horse would have stopped of his own accord, and found himself round the bend of the road and in sight of home while he was still asking himself what impulse had prompted him to do such an unusual thing.

But Tryan did not trouble himself much about the matter; he was really too tired to trouble himself much about anything. That night he enjoyed several hours' unbroken sleep—the first for four nights—and the next morning he was up and out, according to his usual custom, while the white curtains were still closely drawn all down the village street.

The plantations of Cambray Hall stretched a good distance behind the old house, until they almost touched the backs of the houses in the village street. Tryan made his way that morning through the shade of the pines by the footway which led direct from the back of the railway station. He was anxious about some goods which should have arrived from York on the preceding night, and meant to make inquiries, if he were fortunate enough to find a porter about at such an early hour.

The world had not gone well with the Cambrays for the past ten or twelve years, and, as Tryan swung along through the silent plantations, he was wondering what would be the best thing to do when the merciful release came to the suffering man yonder.

Between Dennis Cambray and his son there existed a very deep and warm affection; but, though to lose his father would seem like losing part of himself, he could not wish him a prolonged life in such circumstances as the present. Occupied with his own troubled thoughts, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but plunging along with his hat tilted forward and a cloud of pain in his dark Irish blue eyes, his attention was suddenly distracted from his own griefs and perplexities by the sound of a high clear voice among the trees to the right, speaking in eager, passionate, yet tearful tones.

"It is monstrous—unpardonable! If I had my way, I would catch the cruel fiends in their own traps! I'd let them know what it feels like to be held by the legs between two rows of cruel spikes! I'd make them jump about, too"—the voice went on with increased anger—"make them leap and leap and leap for hours, until the flesh was torn from their bones—just as it is from yours, you poor suffering little creature! If I only knew how to kill you and put you out of your agony this instant!"

Tryan turned abruptly to the right, and trod softly until he saw the speaker—a slim small girl, in a tweed traveling cap and a plain Holland frock, with a mass of dark brown hair, tied back carelessly with a shabby piece of black ribbon, hanging in a bunch of tendrils and rings between her shoulders. Going on a few steps farther, he saw the cause of her anger and pity.

A small rabbit, with the blood still oozing from its broken, lacerated fore-legs, was on the ground in front of this indignant young lady, making pitiful efforts to get away from her, disabled as it was; and close at hand lay the cruel trap from which she had taken it, with pieces of bleeding flesh and tufts of soft fur still clinging to its grisly rows of teeth.

"If I could only kill you—if I could!" she cried again; and then Tryan trod on a twig, and she heard and turned swiftly to him. "Oh, pray, pray come and kill this poor little beast!" she called out impetuously, springing to her feet and clasping her hands imploringly. "I don't know how to do it. Please be quick, and put an end to its agonies!"

Tryan Cambray was not more squeamish than most young men, but popping a gun at a bit of brown fur scudding away

at a respectable distance was a different thing altogether from doing this poor tortured little brute to death in cold death; and he felt very uncomfortable as he put his hand on the small palpitating creature and saw how the agony in its eyes increased.

The girl turned away, pressed her hands tightly over her ears, and stood motionless, until Tryan presently confronted her, after performing his unpleasant task.

"Is it done?" she asked; and, when he nodded, she began to cry. "Oh, the cruelty of it! To think of what it must have gone through all the hours it has been held by that fiendish trap! I wish I knew the man who allowed such revolting cruelty to be committed on his land! I wish I could see him now, while my heart is burning within me with rage and hatred against him! I would make him ashamed of himself, if he had one grain of humanity left in his detestable nature!"

Tryan looked at her flashing eyes, at the tears still glistening on her lashes, at her lips quivering with emotion, and wondered how he could have been blind so long to his own brutal cruelty in countenancing the trapping of vermin.

"They have to be got rid of somehow, you know," he muttered deprecatingly.

"I know that!" exclaimed the emotional little person. "I'm not one of those unreasonable fools who strut about creation shrieking against the killing of all live things; but it might at least be done in a merciful manner! It must be possible to kill a poor little rabbit without putting it to all that prolonged torture; only I suppose nobody considers the helpless creature's agony of sufficient importance to spend a thought on the best way of preventing it. Man the Magnificent is too much occupied with looking after his own ease and comfort, I suppose! I'm glad you came by to put it out of its misery," she went on a little more mildly. "Don't you think we had better go and see if there are any more in this wretched wood to be freed from their sufferings? My——" She broke off, suddenly catching sight of his face. "I believe the sight of that poor thing's agony upset you too?"

"Oh, no!" answered Tryan, half ashamed of his qualm of pity. "But I—I don't think we will hunt up any more just now. I will give orders this very day that that make of trap is not to be used here any more."

"You will give orders!" echoed the young lady quickly. "Then I conclude you are the respectable gentleman I've been abusing so downright heartily for the last five minutes? Are you the owner of this land?"

Tryan shook his head and smiled.

"Not exactly that; and yet I am the man to be blamed when anything goes wrong here."

"Oh, I see—the agent!" she said, in the decisive way which seemed habitual with her.

"Well, yes and no," he rejoined. "I am the agent; but at the same time I'm something else. Dennis Cambray, the proprietor, is my father, and a confirmed invalid into the bargain; so I am really the responsible person, you see."

"I see." She stood looking quietly at him for a few moments, then added, "And you don't look a bit cruel!"

"I don't believe I am," he replied, "feeling somewhat discomposed under her calm scrutiny. "One gets into the way of taking things as one finds them. Now those vile traps, for instance—I never thought——"

"Ah, that's just where it comes in!" she interposed hastily. "It is your own countryman who says, 'Want of thought is as mischievous as want of heart.' I judge Tennyson knew what he was about when he wrote that line, Mr. Cambray."

"I suppose he did, Miss—Gunter, is it?"

She laughed a little, wiped her tears away with such vigor that she made her eyelids quite red, and yielded to his evident desire to change the subject.

"No—my name is 'Bright,'" she said—"Thirza Bright'—'Thir' for short. My mother was a Gunter—eldest sister to those dear lovely little Misses Gunter of yours. How came you to be so smart at placing me? Don't say it was my accent, unless you want me to be real mad with you; I thought I spoke first-rate English!"

"So you do, except when you are very angry," rejoined Tryan, deciding in his own mind that Teddy Greenbury had conveyed the truth exactly when he had described Miss Bright's eyes as "bits of velvet." "And it was not your accent that betrayed you to me. I heard of your arrival last night; and Quilter's Common is not likely to be honored by the presence of two strange young ladies at one time."

"Is it really such a primitive place as all that?" she asked, with a quaint drooping of the lips. "Do you mean to say that you know of the coming and going of every person in the place?"

"More than that. Their coming forms the subject of conversation for months before their appearance, Miss Bright."

"My stars—it must be like the backwoods over again!" she cried, dismayed, moving towards the path with the evident expectation that he would accompany her "What do you do to keep yourselves from stagnating the year round? Are there no civilized beings at all located handy?"

His eyes sparkled with amusement as he answered her, but his voice was grave enough. He was rather awed by this impulsive little person, who looked like a child of sixteen and behaved with the calm self-assurance of a woman of thirty.

"Well, you see, that quite depends upon your notions of civilized beings. There are the Greenbury people—mother, two daughters, and a son—family of a late captain in the Navy, who are generally thought rather decent sort of folk; and there is Nancy Clapper, the Doctor's daughter."

"How old?"

"Nancy? Oh, sixteen or seventeen!"

"Too young to be companionable. Any more?"

"Well, there is Miss Valland, the Rector's daughter."

"How old is she?"

"I'm sure she won't be too young to be companionable," said Tryan, making great efforts to hide his amusement, "but I should not presume to guess her age."

"I hope you don't mean she's a dried-up old frump!"

This time he was obliged to laugh outright.

"Good gracious—no!" he hastened to explain. "She is the handsomest girl for some miles round!"

"And about as old as you, I should reckon, as a guess."

"And how old would that be?" he asked.

"Twenty-five or thereabouts," she answered, looking at him with serene unconcern.

"It's not bad as a guess," he said, smiling. "But what made you set Miss Valland down at that age?"

"Because age doesn't become a sore subject with young women till about then," she replied; "and you said you wouldn't presume to guess how old she was—don't you see? Now I don't mind anybody knowing how old I am. How old do you think?"

"Fifteen," said Tryan audaciously; and she flashed a suspicious glance at him, as if she expected to find him slyly laughing at her.

"That's real mean of you!" she cried indignantly. "Perhaps it serves me right for venturing out in this state of undress, like an ingenue in a French comedy. But how was I to know I was going to meet anybody who is anybody at this unheard-of hour in the morning? I'm twenty, Mr. Cambray—twenty last January—only five years younger than you, after all. And that brings me right level with you in knowledge and wisdom, you know. Women are at least four or five years ahead of men in those matters!"

"Even so I am just a bit in front of you, Miss Bright!" he declared, with a triumphant smile. "I am twenty-seven."

"Are you?" she exclaimed, with a rather doubting accent. "You don't look it."

"But neither do you look twenty. I suppose it is because we are such simple unsophisticated young people."

"Are you simple?" she asked, in such obvious good faith that he laughed aloud.

"Those point-blank questions are terribly disconcerting, you know," he said; and she blushed a soft warm red under her clear brunette skin.

"That is a habit I shall have to break myself of," she confessed, joining in the laugh at her own expense. "We are too much given to personal discussions on the other side. Tell me something about those other girls. The parson's handsome daughter—what is she like?"

"Like everything she should be," answered Tryan promptly; and his companion's little nose was suddenly tilted in instinctive remonstrance.

"Then I'm sure I sha'n't like her," she said; "I have a strong antipathy to perfect people! Oh, I dare say it is envy at the bottom!" she acknowledged, catching sight of his mischievous glance. "I am just full of faults myself, and they'll come to the front most calamitously if I can't find anything to do. How do you amuse yourselves in this queer little settlement?"

"We play a great deal of tennis, and we dance occasionally, and flirt whenever we get the chance."

"Flirt!" she cried. "But with whom? There seem to be no presentable young men in the place."

"Oh, but we import some now and then!" he observed gravely, enjoying her adroit snub, and taking it in payment for his meaning look. "We do our best to make up for our own shortcomings in that way. We get some of the subs. over from the depot at Beverley sometimes."

"Ah, that's better!" she exclaimed, with a sigh of relief which he saw was more than half assumed.

"And in the autumn a few men come down to help me to thin down the partridges on my father's farms," he went on quietly; "and they are always very much at the young ladies' service during their stay."

"Balm in Gilead!" she cried, with a rapturous clasping of her hands. "You have revived my drooping spirits, Mr. Cambray; I shall keep myself alive with the hope of the autumn. I think that is my aunt's garden-wall, so I shall have to break this delightful conversation short. If you would give me a mount, I should be on the top of the wall in a flash."

"But how will you get down the other side?" he asked.

"Oh, I left a garden chair there on purpose!" she replied lightly. "I jumped down on this side when I came out. The shade among these trees looked so cool and quiet, when I peeped over the wall, that I forgot all my good manners. I'm afraid my two little aunties will be downright scandalised when they hear of my morning's adventure!"

"Say nothing about it, then," he suggested carelessly, looking down at her, as she stood with one hand stretched up to the top of the wall and her head resting against her arm, and realizing suddenly that she had a most bewitching little face.

She flushed at his well-meant advice, half vexed, he thought; but she smiled at him the next moment with such frank good humor that a sudden thrill impelled him to put his hand out in farewell.

"Are you angry because I hinted at making a secret of this romantic little affair?" he asked. "I was not thinking of what I said. Will you shake hands?"

She put her hand in his unhesitatingly, and gave it an almost boyish grip.

"I'm going to like you," she observed, with simple directness. "I shall ask my aunts all about you the moment they come down to breakfast; and, if I find you are nice, I shall put you on my list of 'People it is pleasant to know.' Now for that leg-up, if you please!"

The next moment she was over the wall, smiling radiantly across at him.

"You did that well," she said. "Good-bye! Don't forget your promise about the traps!"—and she disappeared so suddenly that he stood and wondered if the garden chair had given way beneath her.

Presently however, he heard her running up the path, singing a gay snatch of song as she went; and he resumed his interrupted walk to the station.

He was thoroughly interested in this new acquaintance; she was something quite fresh in his experience of girlhood. Such startling frankness would have seemed repellent in most girls; but in her it was most attractive, because it was absolutely natural, instead of being assumed for the sake of effect. And what a way she had of arousing a fellow, too—of compelling his attention, of making him see things from her point of view! There was no mistake about it—she was positively delightful, as womanish in her little airs and frivolities as in the beautiful tenderness of her heart.

Then, again, she was pretty; for, though it was a face easy enough to find fault with, how could any girl be anything but pretty with such eyes, melting and mischievous by turns, such hair and teeth, and such a winsome smile? By-the-bye, who was it she reminded him of? But this question he could not answer.

Now and again, while he was talking to her, he had been puzzled by a curious sense of familiarity; and yet now, as he ran over his list of young lady acquaintances, he could not recall anybody in the least like her.

At last he put the idea of this unknown likeness out of his thoughts, and began instead to cast about for some excuse for an early call upon the ladies at Dale Cottage. While he was still following up this idea, he reached the railway station, and discovered the early porter already at his post, ready and willing to answer his inquiries.

CHAPTER II.

THE Misses Gunter—Miss Gunter herself, the intellectual one, and Miss Caroline, the pretty, gentle one—were out under the great pear tree with their niece at afternoon tea, eating luscious yellow gooseberries with their bread and butter—and weakness which they would never have been guilty of before Thir's advent. For thirteen years they had lived at Dale Cottage, and in all that time they had never thought of utilising the fruit on their gooseberry bushes for their afternoon tea. But Miss Bright was stirring them out of their conservative prejudices in many more important matters than the eating of raw gooseberries.

She was a most audacious little reformer, this slender fragile young woman with the large melting brown eyes and the pretty pouting lips. She had a way of going straight ahead in whatever she undertook, without seeming to see the obstacle in her way; and yet she did it with such absolute goodwill, so gaily and pleasantly, that the two middle-aged ladies found themselves bereft of half their hobbies without knowing how it had been done, until they sudden ly realized that they were much better without them.

Under the influence of this delightful tyranny, Miss Caroline's pretty fair hair was released from the bondage of years, and thrown back from her temples in loose soft waves, instead of being dragged down in a hard and fast line on either side of her pretty face—a change which made her look five years younger at once.

Then the piano was pulled away from the wall, and set obliquely, with its keyboard towards the window; and a charming arrangement of ferns in porcelain pots was built up to hide the back. The fireplaces in the sitting-rooms, too, were transformed from shrines of hideous monstrosities in cut paper into bowers of blossoming plants, which filled and lighted up the rooms with their fragrance and beauty.

Altogether, these amiable maiden ladies had lived in a chronic state of "eye-rubbing" ever since their niece's arrival on the scene, and they would look at each other sometimes in breathless wonderment, as if they were about to exclaim, "What next, and next?"

But Thir went on her triumphant way gaily, leaving her aunts to recover their breath all in good time, feeling sure, in her own shrewd fashion, that later on they would be all the better and brighter and happier for having had a good rousing-up.

"Aunt Carry, put the gooseberries on this side of the table, please. I have been watching the dish for the last ten minutes, and, if it is not moved immediately, we shall have to call in that good-natured Doctor Clapper before the morning on behalf of aunt Polly."

The familiar manner of dealing with their names had been one of Thir's first innovations; and, though it had startled Miss Gunter at first to be called anything but Mary, after her forty years of dignity, she was quite reconciled to the more easy-going name now, and would have thought it odd to be called anything else by the bright faced originator of the new title. She laughed indulgently now, and pushed the plate of fruit nearer to Thir's side of the table.

"They are really very good," she said. "How stupid of us to let them rot on the bushes all these years! A little more sugar in this cup than there was in the last, Thir, my love!"

"You are as bad as Mr. Cambray for sweet tea," observed Thir—Tryan had already found a needful excuse and made his call.

"And that reminds me, aunt Polly—are the Cambrays really as poor as he makes out, or is it only a way he has? Do tell!"

Miss Gunter sorrowfully shook her smooth brown head; she had rebelled against her niece's innovations as far as her own hair was concerned, although she admitted the improvement in Caroline's appearance.

"I'm afraid their poverty is a very grim fact, my love," she said. "Most of their property is situated in Ireland, you see, and they are among the many victims to the Plan of Campaign."

"Is that so?" A cloud darkened her bright face for a moment, though her large expressive eyes looked quite as lovely veiled with that touch of sweet sympathy as when sparkling with fun and gaiety. "I'm very sorry for that young man, aunt Polly; he's got more than his fair share of worry, and he never lets you see anything of it."

"No—he always seems to be in good spirits," Miss Gunter agreed heartily;

"but I expect he has his bad times all the same. He is devotedly attached to his father, and it must be heart-breaking to see the old man dying slowly and not to be able to do anything for him."

Thir sighed softly, and Miss Caroline echoed the sigh. Thir, looking up, was struck by the expression on her aunt's face.

"How like aunt Carry is to my dear mother!" she said, with a little catch in her voice, putting out her hand, as if the likeness drew her instinctively towards her mother's sister. "It makes my heart leap sometimes when I catch her looking straight at me just as my mother used to look. Such a pretty little mother she was!" She leaned forward and kissed the gentle face with a clinging tenderness which told of the yearning after the lost mother.

"I understand a great deal of what that poor young Mr. Cambray is going through," she said gently, "because my own loss is still so fresh in my memory. Aunt Polly, drink your tea before it gets cold."

The peremptory command came with such an abrupt change of manner that both the aunts started violently, and Miss Gunter offered a faint remonstrance.

"Oh, you'll get used to my ridiculous cranks in time, dearest!" returned the audacious Thirza gaily. "I always jump round on myself like that when I begin to feel morbid. Snakes," she cried in a whisper—"there are visitors arriving! I saw the whisk of a whiteskirt at the drawing-room window. And here comes Merrit to announce them!"

"Mr. and Miss Valland, ma'am," said Merrit. "They asked for Miss Bright."

Thir scarcely waited for the maid's back to be turned before she puckered her small face into an absurd imitation of a child crying.

"Aunt Polly, I don't want to see Miss Valland," she mumbled dismally. "I'm sure I sha'n't get on with her—she's so hatefully perfect! You go, like the angel that you are, and leave aunt Carry and me to finish the gooseberries!"

"But, my love, what can I say?" urged Miss Gunter. "They have already seen us all from the window. And, besides, you must meet her some time or other. Why not get it over?"

"It is just naughtiness, Thir!" joined in Miss Carry. "You are cross and jealous because we have praised Dora so much. I should like to shake you!"

Miss Bright made another grimace, and rose with an air of the deepest dejection.

"I'll go," she said. "But you'll see—we shall hate each other at sight! No, aunt Polly, I am not going to dress up!" she exclaimed, reading aright the meaning of Miss Gunter's glance at her ruffled cambrick frock.

"If Miss Valland doesn't like me au naturel, she won't like me at all; so we will just risk it as I am, please. Oh, auntie," she cried, softly, checking Miss Gunter as she turned to lead the way to the drawing-room window. "I just wanted to ask you not to let anybody here know how disgustingly rich I am! Folks do make such a fuss over a girl if they know she's got a lot of money. I'd much rather come among them quietly, and make my own place for myself."

"As you please, my love," Miss Gunter replied, and sailed away up to the house, followed by Thir in her creased white gown, tied round the waist with a plain black silk sash, and with a lot of fluffy ends and rings of soft brown hair blowing about her ears and low down at the back of her neck, her brilliant eyes dancing with mischief under the shadow of their soft lashes.

In spite of her determination to the contrary, she was favorably impressed by her first view of Miss Valland, and, in her usual impetuous fashion, was ready to acknowledge that she had been mistaken in her hasty judgment on that young lady. For some reason of her own, however, Miss Valland was not in one of her gracious moods on this day, and, before the visit was over, Thir Bright had almost decided that her prejudice concerning the Rector's daughter would prove more lasting than the more favorable impression created by her charming appearance. For Thir was forced to admit that Dora looked charming as she leaned back gracefully in a low lounging-chair, with her clear gray eyes and glossy fair hair shining beneath the brim of her coarse white straw hat, her faultless complexion accentuated by the spotless white of her clinging gown.

"A picture from crown to toe!" was Thir's mental comment. "And she looks just what young Mr. Cambray said she was—'everything she should be!'" And little Miss Bright stifled a sigh as she thought of the great difference between herself and this "magnificent specimen of womankind."

"And what, on the whole, are your impressions of England?" asked Dora, when the formalities were over. "Don't you find that our splendid cultivation and our perfect civilization more than make up for your advantages in the matter of area?"

Though Thir herself gave way occasionally to the vicious use of the words, there was something so distinctly superior about this speech that for a moment she felt rather small; but meekness was not one of her prominent virtues, and the feeling passed immediately.

"No—I don't think they do," she said, slipping wilfully into a pronounced American drawl. "I like most things big, except hands and feet; especially I like big countries, big men, big fortunes, and big hearts. What are your sentiments on those points, Miss Valland?"

In spite of her good breeding, Dora could not help betraying some surprise at the accent and the strange directness of the sentences.

"I'm real anxious to have your opinion on most things," continued Thir, hardly giving her visitor time to answer, even had she been so disposed; "I've been hearing such heaps about you ever since I reached these parts that I've made up my mind to try to model my manners and notions on yours. Not on the subjects of country, though," she added, with a swift glance. "I'm American down to my shoetips, Miss Valland; I won't trade away my nationality for anything on earth!"

Dora smiled rather constrainedly, and Miss Carry looked so perplexed that Thir had some difficulty in suppressing her laughter. Miss Gunter and the Rector were talking together busily and did not hear.

"Of course it is very kind of you to say such a pretty thing of me to my face," said Miss Valland smoothly, "and I shall be delighted to be of any service to you if I can. I wonder who it is that has been giving you such a flattering account of my character?"

"Well, chiefly young Mr. Cambray," replied Thir abruptly; but she felt unreasonably angry when she saw the crimson flush that suffused Miss Valland's face. She had mentioned the young man's name in that sudden manner for the express purpose of seeing how this daintly young lady would receive it, and now she was in a passion with the result of her little plot.

"Oh—Tryan!" rejoined Miss Valland, in quiet modulated tones. "He may perhaps be excused for his partiality, Miss Bright." And she smiled, with a faint touch of consciousness in her manner which made Thir feel that she hated this calm dignified young woman.

Perhaps it was as well for Miss Bright's reputation that Miss Gunter and the Rector joined them at that moment and created a diversion, for she was quite capable of asking Dora what she meant by her significant manner of speaking of Mr. Cambray, and whether she wished her to understand that she was affianced to him. As it was however, she turned to the handsome robust Rector with genuine relief, and asked him to put her in the way of making herself useful.

"I always had a Bible class of my own at Sunday-school in my mother's lifetime," she told him, "and I got on splendidly with the juveniles. Perhaps, though, it would be different here; my style of teaching might be too—too—too go-as-you-please," she blurted out desperately, utterly at a loss for the right word, "to suit your notions!"

The ladies looked startled; but the Rector took her hand and patted it gently with his big white fingers.

"Your teaching will certainly suit my notions so long as it is really Bible-teaching, my dear child," he said pleasantly. "I can believe you got on well with your class; you have the gift of sympathy—the most useful of all gifts in teaching. You must get Dora to pick you out some nice well-behaved girls, and form a pleasant class for you."

"Oh, but I should much prefer a boys' class," she cried eagerly; "I always get on so much better with the male element!"

The Rector and Miss Carry broke into hearty laughter, Miss Valland raised her eyebrows, and Miss Gunter looked rather disturbed.

"And I don't particularly mind about their being good, either," Thir went on easily; "I assimilate better with naughty boys than good ones, Mr. Valland. It is that 'one touch of Nature' that 'makes the whole world kin,' I suppose. I have a much warmer sympathy with the sinners than the saints."

"And they need it more," the Rector observed gravely. "I don't think we shall have much difficulty in providing you with a class of bad boys; Quilter's Common is about on a par with the rest of the world in that respect. Ask your aunts about their stripped apple trees and the empty nests where there should be eggs."

"That is as it should be," declared Thir. "I was beginning to be afraid that this place was too powerfully good and select for me. You have comforted me no end, Mr. Valland. When the good people grow too oppressive, I shall fraternize with the stealers of eggs and robbers of orchards."

"So much the better for them," replied the Rector, with a very indulgent smile.

"Shall you include poachers among your list of proteges, Miss Bright?" asked Dora calmly. "I heard of your adventure in the Cambry plantations the other morning. I begin to understand it now. You were seeking a poacher or a trespasser to make friends with, and were unfortunate enough to meet only a civilized gentleman instead."

"Was I trespassing?" inquired Thir, faintly conscious of the quiet malice of the speech, but not troubling to notice it. "I've not got used to this close packing yet, you see. In our country we are not always sitting in our neighbors' laps, as you seem to be here. That is one of our advantages in 'the matter of area,' you see, Miss Valland. Did Mr. Cambray tell you about it?"

"Oh, yes—we heard the full particulars!" To judge from the speaker's manner, "the full particulars" were not at all to Miss Bright's credit; but Thir only laughed.

"It was all due to my American inquisitiveness, Mr. Valland," she said gaily. "I wanted to see what was on the other side of the wall, and then, as all the world seemed to be asleep, and there was apparently nobody about to play the traitor, I wanted to see a little farther. But Mr. Cambray assured me yesterday that he had forgiven me."

"Oh, has he called?" exclaimed Miss Valland quickly, and then looked vexed with herself for betraying her feelings.

"Yes," replied Thir quietly. "He brought some new kinds of rabbit traps to show me. But I must not tell you anything about that, Miss Valland, or you will be more inclined than ever to class me with the trespassers and poachers. Please tell me what you think of our alterations in the room—the flowers, and so on. Auntie is dreadfully afraid I am outlandish in my notions; I want you to reassure her. Oh, and, Mr. Valland, do please tell Aunt Carry that you think she looks too pretty for anything with her hair like that!"

"My dear Thir!" remonstrated Aunt Carry, blushing furiously; but the Rector behaved most gallantly, and admired all the improvements with genuine appreciation.

Miss Valland did not make any remark; she was asking herself whether this American girl was really as easy-tempered and shallow as she seemed.

What did she mean by her chatter about Tryan Cambray and rabbit traps?

Had she already managed to establish a familiar footing between herself and Tryan?

If so, it was certainly her own doing, not Tryan's; freedom with ladies was one of the last failings to be laid at his door. It was just that touch of deference and chivalry in his manner towards women which set him above the usual run of young men, and made him so infinitely better worth winning.

Dora Valland had been boastful of her position of "chum" and confidante to Tryan Cambray ever since he had come back from his travels at the first news of his father's fatal malady, and settled down at the old Hall to do his best to soothe the sufferings of an unusually painful death-bed.

It was insufferable, she told herself passionately, that, after these years of tender confidence and friendship, this feather-pated chatterbox should come in between them, with her swart skin and big eyes and American slang, and disturb that perfect understanding which, in the course of events, was bound to end in the usual way.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

We praise the things we hear with much more willingness than those we see, because we envy the present and reverence the past, thinking ourselves instructed by the one and overlaid by the other.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE HANDS.—The lines of no two human hands are exactly alike. When a traveler in China desires a passport, the palm of the hand is covered with fine oil-paint, and an impression is taken on thin damp paper. This paper, officially signed, is his passport.

THE KNIFE.—The use of the knife is very ancient, and the first that we know of were of hard stone. Herodotus tells us that the knives used by the Egyptian surgeons were likewise of stone. Yet the use of the knife among us as a table utensil does not date back to a very ancient epoch.

THE CHERRY.—The fruit of the cherry supplies the inhabitants of some parts of France with a principal article of food, especially the woodcutter and charcoal-burners of the forests; and among their modes of preparing it is that of making it a principal ingredient in soups.

BAMBOO.—Bamboo sheeting is a new Chinese manufacture which is extending in the province of Wenchow. The cane is split up so as to form a sheet, which, after being softened in boiling water, is pressed out flat. The sheets are used for veneering, making traps, fans, screens, and carved fretwork.

INSTINCT.—Where instinct was stronger than both will and reason is illustrated in a story told of Darwin, who was accustomed to go to the Zoological Gardens, and putting his forehead against the glass containing the cobra da capello, to test his will and reasoning power. Darwin was perfectly convinced as to the inability of the snake's harming him, yet every time the vicious snake struck against the glass he always dodged back, in spite of his reason and will to resist the impulse.

THE SALT-CELLAR.—The salt-cellar dates back to remote times, and that is natural, since the use of salt is lost in the night of time. Homer qualifies it as divine. Among the Greeks and Romans it occupied the place of honor at banquets. Among the wealthy it was of silver or gold, and was handed down from father to son. Benvenuto Cellini chased some for Francis I. that were of the most exquisite workmanship. There are likewise some beautiful specimens in faience, and at the Louvre may be seen those made at Oriu for the celebrated set called the service of Diana of Poitiers or of Henry II.

THE ELEPHANT.—Mr. J. L. Kipling, in his "Man and Beasts in India," tells how the elephant's passion for moving about once came near wrecking a ship. A batch of elephants was taken on board at Calcutta, and the steamer went down the Hooghly, and at night anchored off Sangor Point. The sea was as still as oil, but the ship rolled so much that she was in danger of rolling over. The elephants had found that by swaying to and fro all together they could produce a pleasant rocking motion. As the ship had no other cargo and rode light, the captain was much frightened. The mahouts were hurried down into the hold, and each one, seated on his own beast, made him "break step;" but they had to stay there for a long time.

THE DUNMOW FLITCH.—The early history of the Dunmow flitch of bacon is enveloped in obscurity. The legend runs that, in the early part of the thirteenth century, Sir Robert Fitzwater came to Dunmow, and in the guise of a peasant wooed and won a fair peasant-girl. He concealed his real identity for a twelvemonth and a day after his marriage, and then went to the abbot at the priory, told him that neither his wife nor himself regretted their union, and, as a reward for their faithfulness, he asked for the abbot's blessing. The wish was acceded to, and the abbot had just pronounced the blessing upon the young couple when a servant passed along the hall bearing a flitch of bacon. The abbot took the bacon from the man's shoulders, and presented it to Sir Robert as a "worldly gift" for his marital constancy. Thereupon Sir Robert disclosed his real birth and position, and, as a memorial of his happy marriage and the abbot's blessing, he endowed the priory with "acres broad," conditionally that whoever "knocked at the gates" and proved that they had been married a twelvemonth and a day and repented not of their nuptial vows should receive "a goodly flitch of bacon."

FACTION is the excess and abuse of party. It begins when the first ides of private interest preferred to public good gets footing in the heart. It is always dangerous, yet always contemptible.

EVER AS OF OLD.

BY E. S.

They stood beside the old, old stile,
  Beneath the scented May;
They whispered vows with blush and smile
  Just in the old, old way;
They saw the silver crescent rise,
  They heard the vesper chime,
And stars looked down with glist'ning eyes,
  As in the old, old time.

They stood beside the old, old stile,
  Beneath the glowing leaves;
They lingered there to watch a while
  The gath'ring of the sheaves;
They heard the deep-voiced reapers sing
  The old, old harvest rhyme,
And on her hand she wore a ring,
  As in the old, old time.

One stood beside the old, old stile
  When Winter winds blew cold;
Alone he bore the bitt'rest trial
  That human life can hold.
A little grave upon the hill
  Gleamed white with frosty rime
While Christmas bells rang out "Good will!"
  As in the old, old time.

OUT IN THE WORLD

BY THE AUTHOR OF "OLD MIDDLETON'S MONEY," "NORA'S LOVE TEST," "A SHADOW ON THE THRESHOLD."

CHAPTER XXXIV—(CONTINUED.)

"WHAT a strange delusion," said Stannard, in a low voice. "He has been telling me his past history, and I need scarcely say that he is no more Lord Fayne than I am. Poor fellow, poor fellow!"

Heriot ground his teeth and swore.

"That man is Stannard Marshbank, my cousin. It is he who committed the murder. He has just tried to bribe me to remain here. I am not out of my mind. I am excited, almost mad—and no wonder, for he was trying to murder me just before you came in."

"Of course he knows my name," said Stannard, in a whisper. "I suppose he's under the delusion that I wanted to murder him because I tried to keep him in bed just now. I am afraid he hurt his head while we were struggling."

He looked at the mark his blow had left on Heriot's face.

The doctor nodded, and, going to his bag, prepared a composing draught.

Heriot tried all he knew to restrain himself.

"Look here!" he said, "this man is deceiving you! I know everything I am saying—I recognise you all. I have had the fever, and am lying in bed here, at Lone Hut. I engaged myself to Fletcher, at Saint Pedro. His daughter's name is Lily."

The doctor was staggered for a moment; but, unfortunately, Heriot returned to the murder.

"The night I left England a murder was committed. I was suspected of it; but the man who did it stands there," pointing to Stannard.

The doctor approached the bed with the draught.

"All right," he said, "I'll take care this gentleman doesn't get away. Just take this draught, will you. You'll be all right afterwards," he added, soothingly.

Heriot raised his hand to knock the medicine to the floor, when he remembered that this would only confirm the impression that he was mad, and, with a groan of resignation, he drank the sedative.

"Mind," he said, impressively. "Keep your eye on him! He is a cunning devil, and desperate. I will go back to England and give myself up. But he goes with me!"

The sedative was a powerful one, and acted quickly. In a few minutes he was in a kind of stupor, and eventually fell asleep.

The three men went down stairs. Stannard had recovered his presence of mind by this time.

"Poor fellow!" he said. "I hope and trust he will recover, doctor?"

"Oh, yes," said the doctor, cheerfully; "he had got through the worst of it before we arrived. In fact, I am rather surprised that he should be so delirious. Perhaps it was reading the account of that horrible murder that upset him; the mind is in rather a strained condition under a fever of this kind."

"No doubt," said Stannard. "I should really like to stay and see him through it, for I have taken a very great fancy to the man."

"He is a splendid-looking fellow," said the doctor, "and speaks like a gentleman."

"Oh, yes," said Stannard, coolly. "From what he told me of his history, I think he must have been in a very good position before he took to this wild life. You feel sure that he will recover?" he went on; "or else I really think I should have to remain. I don't like leaving a fellow-countryman in such a plight, though any further delay would be not only inconvenient to me, but I am afraid to the Government."

"We must get back, Mr. Marshbank," said the official.

"Yes," said Stannard, with an air of reluctance. Then he added, with a smile, "You don't think I am running away from the charge of murder, doctor?"

The doctor looked up from his plate, and echoed the laugh.

"Oh, no!" he said. "If we were all found guilty on the evidence of a delirious man, very many of us would be unjustly hanged. You can go with an easy conscience, Mr. Marshbank, my patient will pull round right enough. He will sleep for a long time, and when he wakes will be rather dazed and owlish; but he has turned the point, and is certain, so far as man can judge, to recover."

Stannard tried not to look disappointed.

"I'll just go up and look at him, if I may?" he said, "and then we'll start as soon as possible."

He went upstairs, and stood by the bed, looking down at Heriot. He was sleeping as soundly as if he were dead.

Once more, murder gleamed in Stannard's eyes. He looked round the room. Heriot's clothes, hanging on the wall and lying on the chair, attracted his attention. It occurred to him that they might contain something which would enable Heriot to prove his identity. He searched the pockets with feverish haste. They contained nothing which seemed to Stannard of any importance; but he found, in a waist-coat pocket, an ordinary turquoise ring, wrapper in paper. This struck him as rather singular, and he decided to take it.

After another glance at the sleeping man he went downstairs. The hands were already harnessing the horses to the wagon. Stannard still assumed a reluctance to depart.

"If you think there is anything we could do, doctor," he said, "we will remain, even now." He took out some money. "I am afraid the poor fellow is not very well off," he said. "If you will allow me to pay your fee——"

The doctor waved the offer aside.

"I quite appreciate your generosity, Mr. Marshbank," he said. "But there is really no need for it. My fee will be all right with Mr. Fletcher, who is a capital fellow in every way."

In half an hour the wagon had started.

When Heriot awoke from his long and deep sleep he looked round the room with eager and anxious eyes, but they saw only the doctor.

"Where is he?" he asked.

"Where is who?" said the doctor, cheerfully. "How do you feel? You're all right now, aren't you?"

"Yes, I'm all right," said Heriot. "I have been all right since you have been here. I am just as sensible now as I was before. You don't think I am delirious now, do you?"

The doctor looked in his eyes, felt his pulse, and smiled.

"Oh, no!" he said. "You're quite sensible; but don't worry about Mr. Marshbank. If you want to apologise to him, it isn't necessary. He quite understood."

"Where is he!" demanded Heriot.

"He has gone," said the doctor. "He started yesterday morning."

Heriot uttered a cry, then he groaned.

"Gone! You have let him go! My God! he has escaped! What will happen?" He raised himself on his elbow, and looked steadily at the doctor. "What I told you yesterday is the solemn truth. That man committed the Averleigh murder! He is my cousin. I am Lord Fayne. You know I am not delirious now, and I repeat what I said before. You have let that man—a black and heartless villain—get away. He has got the start of me, and will get to England, to work more mischief!"

He thought of Eve in Stannard's power and broke down.

The doctor was staggered and troubled.

"This is an extraordinary statement!" he said.

"It is true!" said Heriot. "I am quite sane, and in my right mind; you know that. What motive should I have for making such an accusation?"

The doctor paced the room, glancing now and again at the now calm, though sad and troubled face; then he came back to the bed.

"Strange as the story is," he said, "I cannot help believing you. What is to be done? This is no way of overtaking him."

"There is only one thing to be done," said Heriot. "I must follow him!" he tried to rise, then fell back, overcome by his weakness. "For God's sake, doctor, if you've a spark of pity in your breast, get me well again as soon as you can. Life and death hang in the balance, while I am lying here, like a helpless log! More than life and death. A woman's happiness—or life-long misery."

CHAPTER XXXV.

ONE afternoon, Eva and Lady Jane were sitting over the fire in the latter's room at the Court. It wanted but three weeks to Christmas, and the weather was frosty and seasonable. A large fire burned in the old-fashioned stove, and threw a pleasant glow over the cosy room; a gipsy table, with a tea equipage, stood between them.

They had both been silent for some time, looking into the fire thoughtfully. Eva held a screen before her face, and every now and then Lady Janet glanced at it with tender wistfulness, as if she longed to glean from Eva's face the tenor of her thoughts.

Since the murder, these two had been very closely drawn together, and scarcely a day passed without their meeting. Eva's presence at the Court lightened the cloud which hung over the place, and was the only gleam of brightness which pierced the sorrow that darkened the lives of the old people.

They never spoke of the murder, they rarely spoke of Stannard. He wrote occasionally, dutiful letters to the Earl, and passionately tender to Eva; but she read them in solitude, and never mentioned them, even to her father. But, though neither she nor Lady Janet referred to the murder, it was seldom absent from their thoughts. They were thinking of it now. Both were wondering why Heriot did not return, why he remained as silent as if he were dead.

Lady Janet broke the silence.

"Stannard will be here by this time to-morrow, dear," she said.

Eva started slightly, but she did not blush.

"Yes," she said. "I had a letter from him this morning, saying that he would try and catch the eleven o'clock train."

"You will be glad to have him back dear?" said Lady Janet.

Eva moved the screen so that it more completely hid her face.

"Edmund and I were talking about you and Stannard, last night," said Lady Janet, timidly; "about your marriage."

Eva repeated the word faintly.

"We both agreed that it would be wrong to allow this—this terrible affair to interfere with your happiness. Stannard was very anxious, naturally, that the marriage should take place as soon as possible; and Edmund, as you know, is almost as eager. But for this—what has happened—I suppose, dear, you would have been married before Christmas? Edmund and I feel that we ought not to let our sorrow be the cause of a postponement-"

"I—I would rather wait," said Eva, in a low voice, and with a sinking of the heart.

"I know, dear," said Lady Janet; "I know how you feel, how deeply and tenderly you sympathize with us all. But we must not think of ourselves, we must not be selfish. For many reasons, the marriage should take place as soon as possible. Edmund and I earnestly wish to see you settled—before—before anything happens to us; and we are old and life is uncertain."

Eva laid her arm on the wrinkled one of Lady Janet.

"Do not speak of it, dear," she said.

Lady Janet smiled placidly.

"One thinks of it if one does not speak of it, my child," she said. "We should like you to feel that we do not wish what has happened to stand between your and Stannard's happiness. If Stannard, when he comes back, wants you to marry him at once, we both hope you will do so."

"Oh, not while this mystery is still unsolved," said Eva. "Not while this trouble is darkening your lives."

Lady Janet sighed.

"The sorrow will always darken our lives, dear," she said. "And there seems no hope of the mystery being cleared up. They have not found Heriot. They may never find him. He may be dead; sometimes I think that he really is dead; if he is not, why has he not come back to prove his innocence?"

Eva's head sank lower.

"I—I do not think he is dead," she said.

"Why do you not think so?"

"I do not know," replied Eva. She only felt that if Heriot Fayne had died, she would have known of it in some way or other.

Within her heart she felt that he was still alive.

"Sometimes I think he must be dead," said Lady Janet. "Heriot is the last man to remain quiescent under such a charge—I know him so well. But whether he is dead or alive, your marriage ought not to be postponed. It can be a very quiet one. You could be married in London—but no, it would be better that the ceremony should take place in the church here. To go away would look as if we were doubtful of Heriot's innocence. And we are not that, Eva, though everything looks so black against him."

"I am not doubtful," said Eva, in a low voice, which thrilled Lady Janet. "I have never thought Lord Fayne guilty, I shall never think so."

"Thank you, dear," said Lady Janet, her eyes filling with tears.

After a pause, she said, in a low voice—

"Has anything more been done? Has the inspector discovered anything?"

Eva shook her head.

"No," she said, "I do not think so. It would almost seem as if he had ceased to take any interest in the case. Yesterday, my father and I met him, when we were out for a walk, and my father asked him if anything more had been discovered, and he answered, almost indifferently, that the case was still a mystery, and began to talk of something else. And yet he seemed quite cheerful, as if the responsibility did not weigh upon him."

"It is very strange," said Lady Janet, thoughtfully. "Is the girl, Grace Warner, here still?"

"Yes," said Eva. "She and the little blind boy. I meet them nearly every day. She has a sweet and pretty face, poor girl! And in some way I cannot help feeling drawn towards her. Mr. Jones says that she has been more than a sister to the little boy, and that she is as good a woman as he knows."

Lady Janet sighed.

"I do not like to speak of such things to you, dear," she said; "but, unreasonable as it may seem"—her voice dropped to a whisper—"I cannot bring myself to believe Heriot guilty of the sin this girl accused him of. I know that he recognized her that night at White Cot, that he called her by her Christian name, and that he did not deny the accusation Ralph Forster hurled at him; but he did not confess its truth, and he did not look like a guilty man. I was watching his face—I know its every expression. He looked surprised and bewildered, but not guilty and ashamed."

Her words found an echo in Eva's heart.

"It is all a terrible mystery," she said.

"Yes," sighed Lady Janet. "And we must wait in patience until God permits the veil to be drawn aside. And you will not oppose our wish, our desire, for an early marriage, dear?"

"We will wait until Stannard comes home," said Eva, in a constrained voice.

She went soon afterwards; and on her way home the dread aroused by Lady Janet's entreaty weighed upon her heart. She still believed Heriot Fayne to be innocent, she did not believe that he was dead. But why did he not come back and try, at any cost, to prove his innocence?

When she entered the drawing-room at White Cot, she found her father lying back comfortably in an arm chair before the fire. A book was on his knee, but he was looking into the flames thoughtfully.

Since the mine had been closed, and Eva's engagement to Stannard had relieved him of all financial difficulties, he had relapsed into his old selfish indolence. But he was anxious for the marriage to take place. He would not be really safe until he had the mortgage in his hands, and Stannard had bargained to place it there on his wedding-day—the sooner the wedding took place the better.

"Ah, Eva," he said, "been up to the Court? When is Stannard coming back?" He spoke quite cheerfully, for the cloud which hung over the Court had long since ceased to oppress him. In fact, he felt rather annoyed with Eva for remaining so sad and quiet. Accidents, even murders, will occur in the best regulated families; and, to his mind, it was unreasonable, not to say selfish, to permit them to make everyone miserable.

"He comes back to-morrow, father," said Eva.

"I am glad of it," he said. "It's time he returned. I can't see why he consented to be sent over to the other side of the world like a Queen's Messenger. If the Foreign Office wanted to send a man to the wilds of South America, why didn't they dispatch some under-strapper, instead of pitching upon a man like Stannard, a member of Parliament, with a stake in the country, and the heir to a title like Averleigh?"

"He is not the heir," said Eva. "Lord Fayne——" She stopped.

"Oh, I know!" said Mrs. Winsdale, poking the fire irritably; "but he can scarcely be taken into account; he is under a cloud, Las disappeared; is probably dead."

Eva's lips quivered as she stood behind him, her hand resting on the back of a chair.

"But there is no use talking about him," he continued, with a touch of impatience. He has upset our arrangements quite badly enough, without our worrying ourselves any further about him." He paused, and went on in a casual way: "I shouldn't be surprised if Stannard asks you to name an early day for the wedding. If he should do so, I hope you won't be so foolish as to refuse."

"Is there any need for haste?" she said.

"Haste!" he repeated irritably. "Is there any reason for delay? Yes, to speak plainly, there is need for haste. Do you forget the agreement between Stannard and me? My safety, our welfare, lies in his hands. If you have any affection for me, if you have any regard for my peace of mind——"

Her hand tightened on the back of the chair, and a look of anguish came into her eyes.

"Father!" she said.

"There—there!" said Mr. Winsdale, fretfully. "Don't be unreasonable. Don't be obstinate. There is no earthly reason why the marriage should not take place now, rather than six months hence. If you study my happiness you won't raise any objection."

She went and kissed him.

"I will do anything to make you happy, father," she said; "you know that." And she stole out of the room.

The next morning Lady Janet sent a note to say that Stannard had wired them to expect him sometime that evening, and that she wanted Mr. Winsdale and Eva to go to dinner to meet him.

Half an hour before dinner time, Stannard arrived at the Court. He looked in at the drawing-room on his way to his room. As he stood in the doorway, his eyes eagerly searched for Eva, they all noticed a certain change in him. It was not only that he was paler than usual; he looked worn and haggard. His eyes were dull, and there were dark shadows under them, such as come from insomnia. He wore a fur coat, the upturned collar of which served to make the pallor of the face more striking.

He smiled tenderly at Eva, and let his eyes rest upon her as if he were drinking in her loneliness as a man drinks who has suffered from a long thirst.

"I will not stay, even to shake hands," he said. "I will be down as quickly as possible. Please go in to dinner, and do not wait for me."

"Stannard looks as if he had had a bad crossing," said Mr. Winsdale, cheerfully. "Our beloved channel is trying enough at the best of times; but, in such weather as this, the ordeal is too terrible to be thought of. Any nation but ourselves would have built a bridge or a tunnel years ago."

They went into dinner, and presently Stannard came down and took his seat beside Eva. He did not attempt to kiss her; but he took her hand and held it in his. Eva tried to smile at him, to repress the shudder which always responded to his touch.

Though he had made a careful toilet, he still looked worn and haggard.

"Have you been quite well, Stannard?" asked the earl, gravely, in the course of the usual greetings.

"Oh, yes, sir!" he replied, cheerfully. "I suppose I am looking rather done up. The fact is I have had a great deal of hard traveling and some worry." He looked gravely round, as if he had something of moment to say, then slightly shook his head, as if he had decided to postpone it. "There are no Pullman cars, or, for that matter, any other cars where I have been, and a few weeks of jolting in a wagon, with no springs to speak of, take it out of a man. It is very pleasant to be back again, and to see you all." He looked round with an affectionate smile.

"We shall expect a full and true account of your adventures," said Mr. Winsdale, delicately picking out the bones from his red mullet. "So, perhaps, you'll make a book of them, and then they needn't be true. Every idiot writes a book, nowadays. Really, I beg your pardon," as everyone smiled.

"That sounded almost rude, but I didn't mean it. Everyone writes a book—a book of travels—if he happens to cross to Boulogne or Calais; a books of impressions, if he goes as far as America; and, if he stays at home, he writes what he calls a novel, though there should be nothing novel about it. Upon my word, I believe that very soon a man's chief claim to respectability will rest in the fact of his being able to lay his hand upon his heart and declare that he has never written a book!"

"Hear, hear!" said Stannard, in the House of Common fashion.

"We are all too clever," continued Mr. Winsdale, with his inimitable manner and pleasantly cynical smile.

"Everybody paints, or writes, or acts, or speaks, and everybody does it more or less vilely. It is the age of the amateur, and a most distinctly uncomfortable age it is. There is no rest for anyone. Everybody is bored to death, excepting the gifted amateur, and everybody is getting so tired of bad pictures, wishy-washy novels, ridiculous private theatricals, and indifferent music, as to have no energy left for the appreciation of good professional work. We shall all begin to loathe the sight of a book, a picture, a theatre, or a piano, and presently art will die of inanition. We shall return to the barbaric age, live in huts, and wear skins; and the man who dares to mention a book or a picture will be led to some retired spot, and be put to death. I will take a little more champagne, if you please."

The earl smiled.

"I find it difficult to picture you living in a hut, and clothed in a bare skin, Winsdale!" he said.

"Oh, I!" said Mr. Winsdale. "I shall be where the amateur ceases from troubling, and the bored are at rest, long before that time. But, mark my words, a revolution is at hand, and the coming generation will have the vivid delight of seeing the heads of our gifted amateurs drop from the guillotine to the saw dust. Nothing but a wholesale slaughter of the chief offenders will save this unhappy country from the flood of impudent incapacity and miserable mediocrity which threaten to swamp it."

Lady Janet smiled gently across at Eva.

"After that terrible denunciation, I think we had better go, my dear," she said.

When the ladies had gone, Stannard sank into a chair, and the cheerfulness which he had forced into his face, disappeared; his eyes grew dull and heavy. He looked furtively round the room, and emptied his glass and filled it again with a hand which he tried in vain to keep steady.

The earl did not notice the sudden change, but Mr. Winsdale eyed him critically, and wondered if he were ill.

"You must have a great deal to tell us, Stannard," said Lord Averleigh.

"Yes, I have, sir," said Stannard, in a low and strained voice, and avoiding the earl's eyes. "Have you any news to tell me? Has anything been discovered?"

The earl knew what he meant, and sighed as he shook his head.

"No, nothing. Everything is just as you left it; the whole affair seems an impenetrable mystery."

"It is strange that I should have news respecting it to tell you," said Stannard; "but it is so. I have seen Heriot."

Both the Earl and Mr. Winsdale started.

"You have seen Heriot?" said the Earl, in amazement.

"Yes," said Stannard. "I have a story to tell which is stranger than any fiction could possibly be." He emptied his glass again, and they both saw now that he was trembling. "I don't think," he continued, "that I could tell the story twice, and, as both Lady Janet and Eva should hear it, had we not better go into the drawing-room?"

The Earl seemed incapable of moving for a moment or two, then rose, and, with quiet dignity and self command, said—

"Are you sure we cannot spare them, Stannard, for it is bad news, I see by your face?"

"It is bad news, sir," he said; "but I fear we cannot spare them. He charged me most solemnly to take a message to them from him, and I promised to do so."

"Let us go," said the Earl. "You will break it to them as gently as possible, Stannard?"

Stannard inclined his head.

They went into the drawing-room. Eva was playing softly on the piano a favorite nocturne of Lady Janet's. She stopped as they entered, and Lord Averleigh, going up to Lady Janet, laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Janet," he said, gently, "Stannard has some news—bad news—tell us. It concerns both Eva and you. You will be brave, will you not?"

The two women looked at Stannard with breathless expectancy. He went to the fire, and leant his elbow on the mantelpiece. His face was turned from the shaded lamp, but they all saw it was pale and haggard.

He moistened his lips, and, with his eyes fixed on the ground, said—

"I wish that this task had not fallen to me! It is very hard that I should have to tell you this bad news; but I have given my word, and I must keep it." He paused a moment or two as if uncertain where to begin, then he went on, in slow and monotonous accents—

"When I reached Monte Video on the mission entrusted to me by the Foreign Office, I found that it was necessary that I should go some little way into the interior. It was a question of boundary, which I had to look into for myself. I started with the official in charge, for the place where the inquiry was to be held. We got off the track one day, and we were obliged to take shelter at an outlying farming station. It was a lonely place on the side of a mountain.

"I do not know its name—I do not even know that it had a name. The station was called Lone Hut. We reached the place late at night. A man was sitting in a chair beside the fire in one living room. He rose to greet me, and, by the firelight, I saw that it was——" He paused, as if he found it almost impossible to pronounce the name; but, indeed, he need not have spoken it, for they all guessed it—"it was Heriot."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LADY JANET uttered a faint cry. Eva made no exclamation, but her hand stole up to her heart.

"It was Heriot!" said Stannard. "For a moment I thought that I must be dreaming. It seemed incredible, impossible, that, after all the diligent searching for Heriot, I, without any attempt of finding him, should come straight from England and meet him face to face in that out-of-the-way spot. I knew him at once, though he was much changed, and twice tried to avoid any sign of recognition."

He paused, and Lady Janet's head dropped lower. Lord Averleigh sat upright in his chair, his hands clasped tightly.

"The meeting was, I need not say, an extremely painful one. At first he seemed indisposed to tell me anything respecting his past movements; but, after awhile he told me he had made his way out there—of course, under an assumed name—and had found employment with the man who owned the ranch, to which the place in which I found him was attached."

"Was he—well?" murmured Lady Janet, brokenly.

"Quite well," said Stannard; "and, so far as I could judge, contented, if not happy. How he could be so under the terrible circumstances, I cannot comprehend. Most men would have been worn to a shadow and driven nearly mad by the weight which he must carry within his heart."

He paused again. They all felt that he had something dreadful to tell them, and that he was trying to break it gently.

"If I could stop here," he said, "how much lighter my task would be!—but I must fulfil my promise! I beg you, dear Lady Janet, to be brave and calm. For some hours we—both of us—avoided the subject of Ralph Forster's murder. I felt as if I could not speak, and I almost hoped that he would let me go without referring to it. But, on the night before my departure, he grew very depressed and melancholy, and, of his own accord, broached the subject."

He moistened his lips again, and cast a quick and stealthy look under his lowered lids at his audience.

"Even then I would have asked him to be silent, but he seemed to be laboring under the desire to bare his breast. He told me all. I will not try to describe to you the anguish of the remorse by which he was racked, as he related to me the awful incidents of the night of the tragedy. I will tell you as shortly as I can what occurred."

Eva had sat quite motionless until now. Now she rose, and seated herself in a darkened corner, where, though she could hear every word, no one could see her face. Stannard glanced toward her quickly, then resumed.

"As you know, he left White Cot in the company of Ralph Forster and the girl—what was her name?—Grace Warner. The girl left them, and the two men walked together towards the moor. They quarreled all the way. To use Heriot's words, Forster was nearly mad himself, and nearly drove Heriot mad. He taunted Heriot with the ruin of his sweetheart, and used every insulting epithet which a man of that class could command. Heriot said that he bore it wonderfully. No doubt he felt that he deserved all that Forster could say; no doubt, he felt that, in his patience there was a kind of expiation. His silence only increased Forster's exasperation. They reached Little Moor. As they were standing on the edge of the quarry, Forster, infuriated by Heriot's silence, struck him."

A shudder ran through the listeners. They seemed to know what was coming. Stannard looked round, and sighed.

"Heriot is the last man in the world to submit to a blow. He struck Forster back again. The two men seized each other, and a terrible struggle ensued. Heriot says that he thinks Forster tried to throw him into the quarry. In their struggle, they drew nearer and nearer to the edge, and, suddenly, Heriot felt himself falling. He says that he thinks he must have been unconscious for a moment. Afterwards, when he came into the full possession of his senses, he found himself lying on the ground with Ralph Forster standing over him with a gun in his hand."

He paused again. The listeners seemed scarcely to breathe.

"Heriot says that Forster was pointing the gun at him. Heriot struggled to his feet, and seized the gun. Another struggle took place, and, suddenly, the gun exploded. Forster fell back with a cry, and Heriot, bending over him, saw that he was shot.

"My God!" exclaimed the Earl. Mr. Winsdale moved, as if to go to Eva, but she put up her hand to keep him back, and he sank into his seat again, wiping his face with his dainty handkerchief.

"Heriot says that, for a minute or two, he did not think Forster was dead, then, when he realised it, he felt his position. Everyone would think him guilty of wilful murder. No one had witnessed the provocation he had received or would be aware of the fact that he had been struck first, and had been acting all through in self-defence."

"Yes," said the Earl, hoarsely; "thank God! it was in self-defence!"

Lady Janet stretched out her hand, sought her brother's, and held it.

"My poor boy—oh, poor Heriot!" she murmured.

"There seemed to be no course open to him but flight," continued Stannard. "No man could be expected to retain his presence of mind under such circumstances. He lost his entirely. How he managed to escape I do not know—he did not tell me. But I think that he must have taken the train at one of the small stations, and left England by one of the less frequented routes."

There was silence for a minute or two. Lady Janet was weeping quietly; the Earl sat with his disengaged hand covering his eyes.

"Heriot bade me tell you all this, and conceal nothing," said Stannard. "He wished to tell you that he was a changed man—that he bitterly repented his wasted life, and that he would do all he could in the future to redeem the past. I begged him to come home and meet the charge that was hanging over him—I told him that in all probability a jury would believe his account of the affair as unreservedly as I had done; but my words had no effect upon him. He said that he could not face the ordeal, that he was contented, if not happy, where he was. The peace, the wild life, suited him. I"—he sighed modestly—"I gave him some money, and I undertook to send out a larger sum when I got to England."

"Thank you, Stannard," said the Earl, deeply agitated.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WEAKNESS and wickedness go hand in hand, and are seldom separated. It is indeed one of the involuntary tributes to virtue that even those who have it not extol it, and even wish for it, though in a feeble and irresolute way.

NEVER hold anyone by the button or the hand in order to be heard out, for if people are unwilling to hear you, you had better hold your tongue than them.

THE YEAR THAT COMES.

BY M. R.

From stately tower and belfry high
The bells peal loud and clear:
Like diamonds in the midnight sky
The myriad stars appear:
O'er valley, glen, and hill there lies
A mantle pure and white,
And, as the Old Year slowly dies,
The New Year comes to-night.

The Year that comes brings drifts of flowers
Fair as the blooms of old,
And robes of green for sheltered bowers,
For ev'ry glade and wold;
And sorrows new, and ills and cares,
New bliss and new delight,
To one and all the New Year bears,
That dwell on earth to-night.

If joys be ours, God grant that they
For Him increase our love:
If woes be ours, God grant they may
Draw us to heav'n above,
That, whatsoe'er our portion here,
Our souls in God's blessed sight
Be pure and sinless through the Year
That has its birth to-night!

Kate Lascelles.

BY F. F. A.

"DID you ever! Such impertinence!" said Kate Lascelles to her cousin, May Lindsay, as they were attiring themselves for a ball that was held in celebration of Kate's twentieth birthday. "The idea of that fop supposing that he could have either of us for the asking! He deserves to be well kicked."

The object of the fair Kate's animadversion was a fashionable young man, who, although very handsome, and a lord, was an execrable puppy, and so vain, that he thought every girl he deigned to speak to must inevitably fall in love with him.

"Whom do you mean, darling?" said May.

"Mean!" said Kate; "why, that Lord de Vassacour; do you know, May, that he has given out that we are ready to jump down his throat, and he has even laid bets on the certainty of our accepting him, if he proposes. Frank told me of it to-day. He happened to hear it at the club. Now, how can we punish the wretch?" As Kate spoke, she turned hastily round to May, displaying as she did so a countenance of such arch beauty that made her at once the envy of the women and admiration of the men.

As she stands there, arrayed in the light gossamer robes that become so well that fairy figure, we shall take the opportunity to describe her to our readers. Her nut-brown hair waved round a head of classic shape, while two curls were permitted to fall on either side, enhancing the whiteness of a perfect neck and shoulders; a nose slightly retrousse gave an air of piquancy to her neck; a rosebud mouth, with teeth of a pearly hue, and brilliant complexion—all these charms would have been sufficient to render her an extremely pretty girl, without the additional attraction of her splendid eyes, whose slightest glance would send a thrill through your whole being. But our pen refuses its task of describing those wondrous eyes; for—to quote Byron—

Who hath not proved how feebly words essay,
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray?

May was, in all things, the opposite of the more lively Kate, and, as extremes always meet, they were fast friends. She wore, on the evening our tale commences, a dress of black tulle, spotted with gold, caught up on one side with crimson camellias, and a flower of the same in her golden hair. Her style of beauty was more queenly than Kate's, though not so brilliant, and her features would have been insipid from their perfect regularity were they not redeemed by her eyes of deep and most expressive blue. May was now on a visit to her aunt, Mrs. Lascelles, who had been some years a widow, and whose husband at his death had left her the Hall and its belongings.

"Now, May, tell me," reiterated Kate.

"Well," said May, "shall we 'fool him to the top of his bent,' and not enlighten him as to the real state of our feelings, which if he knew, by the bye, I do not think he would feel flattered."

"Oh, yes," said Kate, laughing and clasping her hands; "capital! And then, when he proposes—as of course he intends doing—how we shall laugh at him!"

"But, Kate darling, he does not intend proposing to both, surely?"

"Yes, indeed, that is the absurdity of it," replied Kate. "I suppose he knows that your father would not consent, as you are now engaged to Frank. Don't blush, May. So he thinks he is safe there. But for me, I do not know if he really contemplates making me Lady de Vassacour, if he only wishes to engage himself to me, merely for a flirtation. I foresee we shall have some fun with him to-night, and I have only to put a few more finishing touches to my toilette, and I am ready, as I see you are waiting for me, May."

While she is doing so, let us see who are those two youths walking arm in arm, with loose cloaks and crush hats, evidently on their way to a party. The shortest was highly aristocratic-looking, with aquiline features, but such arrant conceit was stamped on his face, that you at once set him down as little better than a fool. We need hardly say, after this description, that he is Lord de Vassacour. His companion was of quite another mould—the man was there. Of a fine figure (six feet high), handsome face, and though only twenty-four, he looked superior to the common herd, and involuntarily commanded respect.

The flashing of his dark eyes showed a fiery spirit within, though at times, when his feelings were touched, they could melt to a woman's softness. Being left in childhood motherless, and with a father whose time was completely taken up with politics, he entered the arena of life at an early age, and the contact with the cold, hard world, served to bring out his powers of self-reliance, and he soon acquired a knowledge of human character, which stood him of great service on many occasions. It would be wondered that Percival Seton, for such was his name, should choose for a companion Lord de Vassacour; but he afforded him amusement, and now he had another object in view, namely, in wishing to be introduced to our two fair damsels, whom he had met very often in his walks, and he was, at the time we introduce him to our readers, accompanying Lord de Vassacour to Mrs. Lascelles' house, where the ball was held.

"Percy, my dear fellow," said Lord de Vassacour, "I think I shall win my bet."

"Do you?" said Percy, "you seem very sure of it. Now, what I have seen of the two ladies in question, I should think it rather a difficult matter, particularly with that haughty fair one. I must say I should not care to stake a heavy sum on it."

"Ah! but you see I have been used to the fair sex all my life, and know very well how to manage them. I'll be bound that they would both give anything to be Lady de Vassacour."

"I thought," said Percy, smiling to himself, "that Miss Lindsay was engaged to Frank Lascelles. How do you propose surmounting that obstacle?"

"Bah!" laughed De Vassacour, "only let me declare myself as Lascelles' rival, and I do not think he would have much chance. Poor fellow! Ah! here we are at the door, and we shall soon see who will be the favored one, Frank or I."

After they had disposed of their hats and cloaks they entered the ball room, which was crowded with the elite of the county. They had some little difficulty in making their way up to the hostess, who was a lady still possessing great personal attractions; she was blooming still, had made the best of time, and time returned the compliment and treated her kindly. Introducing his companion to Mrs. Lascelles, and leaving him to make himself agreeable, De Vassacour turned away to take a survey of the room and its fair occupants. Glancing fastidiously at the different girls, as they whirled rapidly past him in the mazes of the giddy waltz, his eye caught Kate and May engaged in conversation with a young man of a slight graceful figure, Grecian profile, grayish eyes, and budding mustache. This was Frank Lascelles, the brother of Kate, and May's betrothed lover.

Sauntering slowly up to them, he demanded "the pleasure of Miss Lindsay's hand for the ensuing dance," which, as she was not engaged, she seemingly readily acquiesced. Kate stole a merry glance at her, as Lord de Vassacour offered his arm; but Frank did not seem so well pleased, judging from the angry flash of his eye, as May was led away by the conceited young nobleman.

Kate laughingly rallied him on the cross expression of his features, and it was some time before she could disperse the cloud that hung over them; as, for reasons best known unto himself, he hated Lord de Vassacour, and invariably grew moody whenever he saw him addressing May.

"Come, Frank," said Kate, "take me to mamma. I want to go to her, as you are not a very entertaining companion just at present. Can you see her?"

"Yes," replied Frank. "There she is, coming towards us with that handsome Percy Seton."

"Kate, darling!" said Mrs. Lascelles at this moment, "I have brought you a most agreeable partner. Let me introduce you, Mr. Seton, to my daughter."

Kate bowed, and glancing up, met the earnest gaze of Percy, which electrified her—she knew not why—by its thrilling expression. Having obtained her hand for the quadrille then forming, he led her away, the mother's glance following them with gratified pride, as she thought she had never seen two more perfect beings; and she dwelt on the fact of Percy's having a considerable fortune lately left him by an uncle, and how best to secure such an eligible match for her Kate.

"You have not been long here, Mr. Seton, have you?" said Kate.

"No," answered Percy. "I come down purposing only to stay for a day or two; but somehow I have got to like the country; and it will now depend on circumstances how soon I shall return to busy London."

"Do you then lead a busy life?" said Kate, laying a stress on the word busy.

"Ah! I see you are laughing at an idle fellow like myself calling London busy; but I think that you can very seldom be idle in town—there is always something to do. One's evenings are taken up with the opera or the play; and then you have your club, and find a thousand things to do in the daytime. You of course have been in London, Miss Lascelles?"

"Oh, for one season only," she replied. "I came out last spring, and made my debut, as they call it, in town. I liked the novelty of going out night after night very much for a time; but I soon became tired, and was really glad to return to the dear quiet old Hall again, though I must say I could have gone every night to the opera. Titiens had just come out. Do you admire her voice?"

"Yes, very much," replied Percy; "but I prefer myself a contralto. Do you sing?"

"Yes—both my cousin and I do," she replied. "We are extremely fond of music."

"So I hope everybody is," said Percy. "Hackneyed as it is, what Shakespeare says about 'the man that hath no music in his soul' is very true."

"Oh, yes! I see you are an admirer of Shakespeare, Mr. Seton."

"Yes, I am," he replied; "Shakespeare has been one of my best friends; many a weary hour has he whiled away."

In this manner, they conversed, discussing music and the different authors, while May, true to her compact with Kate, was fooling Lord de Vassacour to the top of his bent, and flirting with him in a manner that did not serve to contribute in any way to Frank's good humor.

Thus passed the evening, dancing and flirting, until the gray dawn mingled with the waxlights, and the guests departed, some perhaps with heavy hearts, from the festive scene, where an unseen thorn had pierced them from among the roses that were scattered at their feet; others, with a smile upon their lips, as they conned over tender words from the loved one's lips, or dwelt on equally tender looks, while all were tired and sleepy and glad to retire to their beds.

The next morning Kate and May were seated in a prettily furnished boudoir, detailing to each other the events of the previous evening.

"You seem rather thoughtful this morning, Katie; are you thinking of your new conquest, Percival Seton?" said May, after a pause of some minutes.

"Now, May, did you ever find me waste a thought on one of the male sex?" replied Kate, blushing, and looking at the same time rather conscious; "but," she added, wishing to change the conversation, "tell me, how sped Lord de Vassacour's wooing, for I was too sleepy last night to ask you."

"Oh! as you may suppose," replied May; "he proposed in due form, but in such a ridiculously condescending manner; that I had the greatest difficulty to refrain from laughing in his face. However, I looked as grave as I possibly could, and thanking him for the honor he intended paying me, I politely refused him on the plea that I entertained no other sentiments but those of friendship for him. You may imagine how blank his lordship looked! And, after urging his suit a little longer, he begged that I would not mention the fact of his having offered, and with that he left me."

"What fun!" said Kate; "how I should have laughed; I suppose it will be my turn next."

"Oh! no doubt," replied May; "but, do you know, Kate dear, I half regret having flirted so with Lord de Vassacour, as Frank is so cross with me. He has gone off this morning without coming and sitting with us as he always does, and he would hardly say 'Good morning' to me. I am afraid I have been very much to blame," and the tears stood in her eyes as she spoke.

"Now, my dear coz," said Kate, fondly, "do not look so sad. Frank will soon get tired of his present behavior, and will become, if that were possible, more devoted to you than ever."

"I trust you are a true prophetess, dear," returned May. "But see who are coming up the avenue—no other but his sapient lordship with your friend Seton, and I declare Frank is with them. I suppose they have come to inquire how we are after last night's dissipation. What a conceited walk Lord de Vassacour has, and how nobly Percy Seton carries himself."

"Do you think so?" exclaimed Kate, eagerly. "So do I."

"I knew that, dear," said May, pointedly.

"How foolish you are!" replied the blushing Kate, as the trio at that moment entered.

They were all engaged in an animated conversation, when Percy, addressing Kate, asked her "if she sang?" She replied in the affirmative, and immediately begged May to sing a duet with her.

"Which do you prefer, Mr. Seton, English or Italian music?" asked May.

"Perhaps Italian," he replied, "though there are some especial English ballads that I prefer. German music is my favorite though. What are you going to favor us with, may I ask?"

"The duet in 'Don Giovanni,'" she replied.

"Capital!" said Percy. "You could not have chosen anything better."

They sang the duet extremely well, as both had had their voices cultivated by good masters; and they were applauded rapturously.

After all the compliments were duly paid, Kate turned laughingly to Lord de Vassacour and said, "Surely you sing. May I find a song for you? I will play the accompaniment, if you do not do so yourself."

"Well, really, Miss Lascelles, it is a hard thing to refuse a lady anything, and more particularly a beautiful one," said his lordship; "but to tell you the truth, I have quite given up my singing, as when I did I was bored so to sing one song after another, until I was quite knocked up. So in despair one day I gave the thing up. But now I hope you will give us a song." So saying, he went to the piano and selected a beautiful ballad, showing more taste than one would have expected from him, though, to give him his due, he possessed it in a great degree.

A deep silence prevailed, when the rich tones of Kate's contralto voice floated on the air. She sang with great feeling and taste, giving the words of the simple ballad of "Sing me an English Song," with touching effect. When she had finished, Lord de Vassacour was profuse in his commendations. Percy was silent; but when Kate glanced towards him to see what effect her singing had on him, she was more than satisfied as she read the expression of that soul's interpreter, his eye.

Frank and May then sang a duet, and after them Percy sang the much admired German song of "Thine is my heart," and as he ended it, he turned his dark eyes on Kate, with such a meaning look, that she confusedly cast down her own.

Mrs. Lascelles now came in, interrupting the singing, and the conversation became general. She invited De Vassacour and his friend Seton to come and dine in a quiet way, to hear some music; they, of course, readily assented, and soon after they took their leave.

After their departure, Mrs. Lascelles returned to the drawing-room, and Kate hurriedly hastened to her own room, where she might, uninterrupted and alone, think of the one to whom she was fast surrendering her young heart, thus leaving Frank and May alone. The latter broke the awkward pause that ensued, by saying, "What has ruffled your temper this morning, Frank? I declare you quite frighten me with those grim looks of yours. There, you never alter your countenance in the least; but still wear that, I must say, very unbecoming expression. Have I done anything to offend you?"

"I do not suppose you would care if you had," replied Frank.

"Why, what do you mean?" asked May.

"Mean!" said Frank. "Why, I would say your own conscience would tell you, without my doing so."

"Really, Frank," said May, haughtily, "if you intend taking this tone to me, I may as well tell you at once that I shall not stand it. I do not at all understand what you mean by your allusions to my conscience; it must be a very dull one, as it does not enlighten me in the least."

"Oh! forgive me, May," said Frank, subdued in an instant; "but really I thought you had ceased to care for me after your flirtation with that horrible puppy last night. Indeed, if you only knew how wretched I have been ever since, you would, I am sure, readily forgive me"

"Well, I shall, Frank, but only on the condition that you are not again cross without having sufficient cause. The idea of supposing that I care one bit for that Lord de Vasacour! I thought you knew me better, Frank!" and May put on a pretty injured air.

"My own love," said Frank, taking her hand, and imprinting a kiss upon it, "Then you freely forgive me?"

"Yes, dear Frank, and you must be a good boy in future, remember. But now let us resume our reading."

Frank got the book, and they settled themselves down for the remainder of the morning, reading and conversing on subjects of interest to none but themselves; so we shall not exhaust our reader's patience with detailing their conversation.

Percy returned home in a deep reverie, hardly attending to De Vasacour, who, finding him a dull companion, left him, much to the relief of the former. Arriving at his lodgings, Percy threw himself on a sofa, and indulged in very pleasant thoughts, to judge from the happy expression that played on his handsome, intellectual face. He then arose, whistling (not "from want of thought") the duet from "Don Giovanni," and sitting down to his writing-desk, commenced a long letter to a staunch friend of his, to whom he had been accustomed to pour out all the joys and sorrows that had befallen him from the period of childhood until now. It was a long letter, and anyone looking over his shoulder could perceive the name of Kate used very often; indeed it seemed all of her; though, what he could find to say to enable him to fill up eight pages, in more than we can imagine. When it was finished he got up, and prepared to take a walk, in order to while away the tedious hours that would intervene before he would again be in the presence of the enchanting Kate.

After dinner the evening passed in much the same manner as the morning had. Music and looking over Kate's portfolio beguiled the time, which did not seem, by-the-bye, to hang heavy on any of their hands, unless it was on Lord de Vasacour's, who did not find a single opportunity to speak to Kate in private, owing to her being completely engrossed with Percy's amusing and entertaining conversation. This vexed him a little as he did not see much prospect of winning his bet; but, still he trusted to his good looks, his coronet, and his general luck with the fair sex, to cut out Percy, whom he saw was beginning to appear a formidable rival.

Three weeks passed quickly for all the parties, engaged as they were by riding, and taking long walks in the beautiful country that surrounded the Hall, and during this period, Mrs. Lascelles saw with delight that the admiration Percy felt for Kate was fast deepening into love. Matters were thus progressing when Percy one morning ordered his horse, and jumping on his back, he gave the spirited creature his head, and was soon galloping away over the downs, leaving the Hall far behind him.

Having traversed some miles in this break-neck fashion, he slackened his speed, and turned his horse's head homewards, when he perceived a horse rapidly approaching him, and as it came nearer, he could see that it was running away with a lady, as the long skirt of a habit showed its rider to be. Percy had great presence of mind, and he directly determined to stop the course of the horse. Standing therefore in the middle of the road, he waited until it came up to him, which, in a few moments it did.

The horse, seeing an obstacle in his path, made a swerve, and attempted to rush by it, but Percy prevented its doing so, by making a dash at the bridle, which was hanging loose, and which he fortunately caught, and retaining it in his strong grasp, completely stopped the progress of the panting horse. Turning round to reassure the rider, and to see who it was that he had thus opportunely rescued, what was his surprise to behold Kate Lascelles! Her face was deadly pale, and she seemed greatly agitated; for, though she was a capital horsewoman, she was not very courageous, and it was evident that the fright had completely unnerved her. She was endeavoring to the best of her powers to thank her preserver, though only broken sentences were the result. Hastening to relieve her, Percy asked if she was much frightened, and if she thought she could ride her horse home.

"Oh, yes! now you are with me, I shall not fear!" exclaimed Kate, and she then began to give him an account of her ride.

It appeared that Kate was out riding with May and Frank, and her horse, which was a very fresh one, took fright at something, and before she was aware, had carried her far away from her companions. She averred that if Percy had not stopped her when he did, nothing could have saved her from falling, as her senses were fast forsaking her, and she felt herself gradually slipping off, and she shuddered as she thought of the probable consequences, as owing to the headlong pace of her steed her fall must have proved fatal, or, at least, have fractured one of her limbs. She then again thanked Percy, but this time more intelligibly, and she became covered with blushes when he interrupted her by saying, with a look that said more than words, how delighted he was to have come to her rescue, and that it rendered him the happiest man on earth.

Conversing agreeably, they slowly rode homewards. Kate no longer feared now Percy's hand was on the bridle of her refractory horse; and they were both sorry when the figures of Frank and May appeared in view, riding in hot haste. Both were delighted when they saw their dear Kate safe and well, for they had naturally been very anxious about her, and they overwhelmed Percy with expressions of gratitude and admiration at the prompt manner in which he had saved Kate.

They soon arrived home; and Percy, after carefully dismounting Kate, while Frank did the same office for May, took his leave, and returned to his lodgings, his mind in a chaos of conflicting thoughts.

The next morning Lord de Vasacour, determining to end his suspense (as it really was, for he was completely enthralled by the fascinations of the lovely Kate), proceeded to indite Kate a letter, laying at her feet his splendid self, and other attractions to boot, and a complacent smile played round his lips while sealing his note, as he thought it would be next to impossible to refuse him.

In due course of time Kate received this letter, and a peal of merry laughter escaped her lips as she finished it, and calling May, who was in the next room, she said, "Here it is, May, at last: do listen while I read it:—

"'Dearest Miss Lascelles, you will, I am sure, forgive my boldness in thus addressing you when I acquaint you with the fact that I now take up my pen for the purpose of offering myself to you. Yes, I offer myself to you, firmly convinced that after all I have seen of your character, you are the only woman I could be happy with, and that you are well worthy of being Lady de Vasacour. You will, perhaps, wonder, at my so hastily making known the sentiments I feel for you; but every moment is torture until the happy one when I shall know for certain that you will be mine. Allow me to subscribe myself, in the meantime, yours until death,

ADOLPHUS DE VASACOUR.

"Is not that an absurd letter? He takes it for granted that I shall accept him, such a puppy as he is!"

"And now you must answer it, Kate; poor fellow, he has completely lost his bet," said May, laughing. "I shall leave you to do so, as I have promised Frank to go for a walk with him." So saying she tripped lightly down stairs, and joined Frank, who was waiting impatiently for her.

Kate watched them from her window until they were out of sight, and then sat down to reply to De Vasacour's proposals. She refused them in a calm, decided manner, that would leave no doubt in the mind of the reader, and then, when she had finished, threw herself in an armchair. As she sat there, half-reclining, she seemed like "the embodied vision of the brightest dream" that ever blessed the eyes of mortal, with her bright hair, which had escaped from its fastening, streaming around her, her lustrous hazel eyes fixed pensively in thought, now flashing, now growing strangely dark, as different emotions chased each other rapidly across her mind. She was for the first time examining her own heart, which told her that she loved with all the fervor of first love the noble Percy, and that he returned her affection she could hardly doubt, for every look and gesture of his betrayed the truth. With what rapture she dwelt on the tones of his voice; for when addressing her they assumed a deeper, tenderer tone, and she felt again in imagination that soft lingering pressure of his hand.

Musing thus, Kate was awakened from her trance by hearing a well-known footstep, whose sound caused her heart to beat with redoubled violence. Her first impulse was to fly, for she felt that she could not meet him alone, without some preparation; but she was frustrated in her design by Percy entering just as she had nearly effected her escape through the French window that opened into the garden. She stopped short, and with her face suffused with blushes, she advanced to meet him. He took her hand gravely, and, after inquiring after the rest of the family, he said, sadly, "Miss Lascelles, I little thought I was so obnoxious to your sight that you are compelled to shun me, as you did just now."

"No, no, no!" interrupted Kate; "it was not that, believe me,"

He gazed at her for an instant, and then exclaimed bitterly, "Ah, I see it now! You have perceived what I have in vain attempted to conceal; and in your kindness of heart you wished to spare me the pain of a refusal. Kate—let me call you so for once—hear me. From the first moment I beheld you I adored you; and to hear your voice and to receive one kind smile and look was joy sufficient unto me then; but now I cannot bear it. I must fly from the intoxication of your presence—where to I know not. Here I cannot stay: for every hour I pass with you only serves to increase my mad and hopeless love for you. Kate, when I am far away, and the wide sea rolls between us, say that you will think with kindness on one whose every thought is yours."

So rapidly had he poured forth his words, that Kate endeavored in vain to interrupt him; and now, when he again repeated his request, she could only murmur, "Do not go, Percy!"

Percy seized her hand, while he exclaimed in a voice of heartrending pathos, "Kate, Kate, do not trifle with me! Do you really mean what you say?"

She replied by a look from her beautiful eyes that fully satisfied her lover, who stole his arm around her waist; and the embrace that followed told better than words could how they were to each other. Then came explanations, and vows of unalterable love; and in their new found happiness we will leave them, and see how it fares with De Vasacour.

On receiving Kate's answer he opened it with trembling hands; and when he had perused it he threw it passionately on the ground, and with dishevelled hair and flushed face he paced wildly up and down the apartment.

"Fool that I have been!" at last burst from his quivering lips, "to fancy that such as I could win that fair, angelic creature! Oh no, she could not be content with an empty-headed fool like myself! She would require deep love—love, did I say? Ah! no one could give her such love as I could. Kate—beautiful Kate! Your image shall be for ever enshrined in my breast with all things good and pure; and this day shall make me a wiser, as I am a sadder man."

Ringing the bell for his valet to pack up his portmanteau, he started soon after for London, where our friends last heard of him as having quite given up his foppish habits, and become a creditable member of society.

We shall now close this short story, giving only one more scene that may perhaps interest our readers.

One morning six weeks after the events last stated, there was a great bustle in the pretty village of Oakhurst. It was, we were told, a double wedding, of two of the prettiest girls in the county. Just then emerged from the ancient porch of the fine old church a couple radiant with happiness; they seemed indeed born for each other, and, as they stepped into the carriage waiting to convey them, we had little difficulty in recognising Frank and May.

The second pair now made their appearance. They were a noble couple, Percy and Kate; the bridegroom, with his handsome features wearing an expression of intense happiness, seemed the very personification of all that was perfect in man, while his no less happy bride, with a face of April smiles and tears, hung on his arm, while her eyes beamed with looks of devotion on the being she had chosen to love, honor, and obey, for the rest of her life.

Scientific and Useful.

JAPANNED GOODS.—In cleaning Japanned goods never use warm water. Wet a cloth slightly in warm water and rub the article to be cleaned. Should any smear appear, sprinkle with flour and wipe dry.

WIRES.—In distributing telegraph wires for army purposes, preparatory to establishing communicating stations, it has been found that a great economy in time is effected by mounting the reel on a bicycle.

COTTON.—A method has been discovered of making artificial cotton from wood fibre. The latter is first reduced to pure cellulose, and is then treated with chloride of zinc, castor oil, and gelatine, and the paste is passed through a perforated plate.

ALUMINIUM.—One of the newest aluminium alloys is "gold aluminium," which is said to resemble gold in color, and is being worked into spoons, forks, etc. It is easily cleaned, we are told, and retains its polish with much less care than sterling silver.

A MILITARY NOVELTY.—A "man carrying kite" is the latest novelty in military circles. It will surprise many persons to learn that a kite, or rather "five hexagonal kites flying at a varying distance apart on a continuous line," may be made to raise a man fifty feet above the earth's surface.

WRITING ON GLASS.—Fluid to write on glass is made by mixing with hydrofluoric acid enough barium sulphate to give it consistency, so that it will not spread, and will show well on the glass. Ammonium fluoride may also be added. After the writing has stood some time it is washed or dusted off, and the etching appears. Use a glass pen.

TO RETAIN THE COLOR OF FLOWERS.—It has been ascertained that ammonia in the air is the main cause of flowers losing their tints and colors. In order to preserve them in their natural state as nearly as possible, they should be preserved between paper that has been previously saturated in water having one per cent. of oxalic acid.

Farm and Garden.

FORESTS.—Forests regulate moisture by preventing the rapid flowing away of the rains in streams, retaining the moisture to be sent down the streams gradually and steadily.

BUTTER.—The maker of good butter has always a brisk demand for his goods at a paying price, and the sale of the milk and the cream to the adjacent city or town will return even a better revenue than butter, and with less labor and care.

BREEDING.—One point in favor of breeding old sows is that they will bring forth two litters in a year. For this and other reasons there seems to be a decided reversion of feeling against the practice which has so long obtained of breeding immature sows.

CORN AND WHEAT.—The corn and wheat crop may fall below the paying point, but a well selected herd of dairy cows, managed with good judgment, generously supplied at all seasons with everything they need, will never disappoint when the balancing of accounts is done.

GRINDSTONES.—A grindstone should not be exposed to the weather, as it not only injures the wood-work, but the sun's rays harden the stone so much as, in time, to render it useless. Neither should it stand in the water in which it runs, as the part remaining in water softens so much that it wears unequally, and this is a common cause of grindstones becoming "out of true."

PLANTING.—If people planting orchards would give orders to mark the north side of trees with red chalk before they are taken up, and when set out to have the trees put in the ground with their north side to the north in their natural position, a larger proportion would live. Ignoring this law of nature is the cause of so many transplanted trees dying. If the north side is exposed to the south, the heat of the sun is too great for that side of the tree to bear, and therefore it dries up and decays.

FIRST A COLD, AND THEN ANOTHER ON TOP OF IT, until the accompanying Cough became settled and confirmed—is the sad story of many a Consumptive. How much better to use that safe curative Dr. Jayne's Expectorant, on the first appearance of danger, when the symptoms may be easily controlled?

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

ISSUED WEEKLY AT 726 SANSOM ST.

A. E. SMYTHE, Publisher.

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY 4, 1896.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

[IN ADVANCE.]

1 Copy One Year..... $2.00
2 Copies One Year..... 3.00
4 Copies One Year, and One to getter-up of Club..... 6.00

Additions to Clubs can be made at any time during the year at same rate.

It is not required that all members of a Club be at the same postoffice.

Remit by Postoffice money order, Draft, Check or Registered Letter.

ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED ON APPLICATION.

Address all letters to

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

About Old Times.

There is no time like New Year's for thinking and talking about old times. The novelists often remind us of people who desire above all things to forget their distant past and the acquaintances who filled it. When these lovers of oblivion are confronted by some one who comes as an apparition from a most inconvenient past, they are suddenly affected by an astonishing loss of memory.

If they could have their way, they would make their life begin with their days of prosperity. It is not because their friend of early date is out of keeping with existing surroundings, or because they have moved on socially while he has stood still; nor is it because of any difference in manners or incongruity of ideals that the renewed intercourse seems jarring and awkward. They feel resentfully that he makes it more difficult to avert the mind from years which, pride says, may tarnish the glory of to-day's success.

No doubt there are people of this class, though it is questionable whether they are as numerous as their many portraits in fiction would seem to indicate, for such a state of feeling is in a very high degree artificial. The natural impulse of almost every man and woman is in favor of a pleasant lingering over old times, half-remembered acquaintances, fading scenes.

The-matter-of-fact people who like to think that everybody has some utilitarian end in view in whatever they do would be tasked to find a mean reason for the delight we all feel in thinking of our earliest days—a delight that is quite separable from an interest in our own individuality. There is nothing to be gained from such memories except the pleasure of watching afresh the play of life from an impartial vantage-point. One commonly hears discontented people sighing for the days of light-hearted youth; but the belief that we were happier then, and more free from care than we are likely to be again, is not the attraction that draws our thoughts backwards—indeed the self-centred man or woman who can see only one figure in the middle of every picture of the past can hardly be counted worthy of a share in our cosy chat by the fireside. It is the people, the scenes, the doings and sayings that grow up afresh before the mind's eye so romantically, and not the exact whereabouts in it all of our stupid selves.

So far from a love of the past, with its living stories, having a personal bias, we believe that love is often strongest in those who do not covet a return of their childhood, and who would hesitate long before they challenged afresh the anxities and struggles they have once known.

The happy childhood is true enough for many, though those who have it in perfection often realize it least; but how many thousands of others would choose, if there were a choice of repeating life to begin again at eighteen years of age, or perhaps at five-and-twenty, when they first felt that, to a large extent, their fate was in their own keeping! Yet these very people, who have come through an anxious youth to a confidence and satisfaction in life that were before only a distant hope amid much worry, will take the keenest pleasure in watching again scenes in which their own part was not attractive. No—it is not selfishness that gives us this delight in retrospect.

It is, in a small degree, an interest in seeing how memory can put together the puzzle-picture of the past, and in discovering how many of the squares are missing. In a larger degree it is the atmosphere of romance in which far-off days are steeped, because we saw the world with freshness and simplicity. And chiefly it is that love of the variety in man which sends us all to tales, to read and read again the curious phases of human character and their expression in sayings and doings, which lures us to look closely, and always with delight, at the multitude of men and women whom we have known who contain the materials for all the tales we have ever read.

One of the unfailing resources of those who talk of "auld lang syne" is the recalling of "characters" that appeared so much more plentiful then. Why is it that people grow more distinctive as the perspective is extended? If you look round you to-day, you will see a great deal of rather uninteresting mediocrity, whereas in the distant past every character is sharply defined.

Everybody reappears, posed as by a painter, in the most characteristic attitude; and these remnants of remembered life all seem rich and romantic, like the best bits out of the tales of those who have written from knowledge.

If we want a lesson from our recollections of early days, perhaps it may be found in this—Ought we not to see in the life that is now around us that distinctiveness of character in each of our neighbors that will be worth remembering, and that, if remembered, will thickly people our world of mind in years to come with quaint and welcome figures? Are you irritated by the angularities of this or the pulpy fatuousness of that associate?

The irritation will pass, and the qualities hard to bear now will give you a pleasant smile when they come to you as recollections a dozen years hence. Why not smile now? Very likely the smile would be more just than a frown. We should all be the happier if we could make life as placable as memory.

DECISION is a noble element of character. The vacillating man can never realize greatness. He wastes his impulses and time in hesitancy, he poises too long between opposite forces, and, when he moves onward, it is with the faltering step of indecision. His faculties are relaxed—they are not condensed into a manly force by a determined will. How many opportunities for doing good in great or small degree are lost by indecision! Whilst we are asking ourselves, "Shall I, or shall I not?" the moment is passed, and the flower of joy which we might have given is withered, and often can be no more revived even by tears of penitence.

IF the laborer's arm be weak and his frame fatigued, his blows cannot be firm and strong; if the mechanic lacks skill and judgment, his work must be inferior; if the artist's eye be defective, his picture cannot be true; if the author's brain be weary, he cannot realize his best possibilities. Yet each of these may be incessantly toiling and, as they suppose, not wasting a minute, while, in truth, they are wasting precious hours by not bringing their intelligence to bear upon the real need of their other work—rest.

MOST of us have had troubles all our lives, and each day has brought all the evil that we wished to endure. But, if we were asked to recount the sorrows of our lives, how many could we remember? How many that are six months old should we think worthy to be remembered or mentioned? To-day's troubles look large, but a week hence they will be forgotten.

GOETHE says, "What is the true test of character, unless it be its progressive development in the bustle and turmoil, in the action and reaction of daily life?" This progressive development is but the daily and hourly cultivation of those virtues in which we are deficient, that we may each become a rounded and well-proportioned whole.

THERE are problems of life beyond the power of men to exhaust, and in that certainty or uncertainty it is our privilege to rest. The human mind may and ought to respond as calmly before a confessed and unconquerable difficulty as before a confessed and discovered truth.

THERE is enough in the world to complain about and find fault with, if men have the disposition. We often travel on hard and uneven roads; but with a cheerful spirit, we may walk thereon with comfort, and come to the end of our journey in peace.

THERE is no slight danger from general ignorance; and the only choice Providence has graciously left to a vicious government is either to fall by the people, if they are suffered to become enlightened, or with them, if they are kept enslaved and ignorant.

IF we would only try to be pleased with the present circumstances of our surroundings, how much more true happiness would flow from such an effort than from constantly striving after changing conditions, with problematical results.

IT is hard work to live on good terms with an exacting companion. The very quality of exactingness includes jealousy and suspicion and the restless feeling that never a sufficient amount of homage is paid, let what will be done.

POSITIVE good is the best means of curing negative evil. When we are deliberately planning to increase the happiness of others and to further their welfare, we are not likely to injure them by thoughtless actions.

REVENGE is a momentary triumph, of which the satisfaction dies at once, and is succeeded by remorse; whereas forgiveness, which is the noblest of all revenge, entails a perpetual pleasure.

BEWARE of idleness; the listless idleness that lounges and reads without the severity of study; the active idleness, for ever busy about matters neither very difficult nor very valuable.

FRIENDSHIP hath the skill and observation of the best physician, the diligence and vigilance of the best nurse, and the tenderness and patience of the best mother.

LITTLE joys refresh us constantly, like house-bread, and never bring disgust; and great ones, like sugar-bread, briefly, and then satiety.

THERE are natures which blossom and ripen amidst trials which would only wither and decay in an atmosphere of ease and comfort.

IF wrinkles must be written on our brows, let them not be written upon our hearts. The spirit should never grow old.

EVERY heart knows its own bitterness, but to reiterate it, to multiply it, to make others taste it, is cruelty without excuse.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENT.

G. B.—The Amazon is the largest river in the world. Its extreme length, from the source of the Huallaga, is 3,944 miles. At its mouth its width is 95 miles. Including the island, the width of the two mouths is about 250 miles. So immense is the volume of water and the impetus with which it flows, that it is carried unmixed into the ocean to the distance of some 250 miles.

B. L. L.—A high forehead indicates plenty of reverence and self-esteem. The curl inclosed in pale golden-brown. Dark and light blue, apple, and sea-green and heliotrope colors are worn by a person having a fair complexion. Impossible to tell the young man's disposition from his complexion. Good and bad qualities do not show themselves in hair and skin, and we are not a necromancer.

CLARA B.—Genuine ebony is far too costly; so it is not real ebony that is used in furniture—save in very expensive pieces. "Ebonized" wood is the substitute. Any close-grained wood can be used. The preparation is to boil, in a glazed vessel, with water, four ounces of gall-nuts, one ounce of logwood chips, half an ounce of vitriol, and the same of crystallized verdigris; filter while warm. The wood is brushed a number of times with the hot solution. Thus stained black, the wood is then coated two or three times—being allowed to dry completely after each coating—with a solution of one ounce of iron filings in a quart of good wine vinegar. This is to be prepared hot and allowed to cool before use.

J. F.—Friends have to learn to bear and bear with one another. There are some traits in their dispositions which ought to be given a wide berth, or else misunderstandings and alienations are pretty sure to befall. Some folks of excellent social natures cannot bear to be teased about trifles, and will fall into a fit of the sulks when the placid tenor of their ways is thus infringed upon. The only way to restore peace is to apologize for such an unintentional offence, and to take good care that it be not repeated. It will not answer, in your own case, to stand off in cold silence until your lady friend appears to be willing to show herself sociable again. In that event, all the chances are that matters would go from bad to worse, and the intimacy would come to an end.

STUDIOUS.—The alphabet that contains the greates number of letters is the Sanscrit, 46; the Georgian contains 40; Russian, 36; Persian and Coptic, 32; Turkish and Arabic, 28; Spanish, 27; English and German, 26; Latin, 25; French, Greek, and Syriac, 24; Dutch, 23; Italian and Hebrew, 22. The Chinese language is the most difficult to learn; the Italian is the softest language, the Spanish is most pompous; the French most polite and passionate; the English most copious and energetic. A spider usually has eight eyes and they are differently arranged according to the insect's necessity. Spiders living in webs have the eyes raised; spiders living in holes and dark caves have eyes in a group in the front of their head; others have them more scattered.

STUDENT.—The Nihilists of Russia comprise a considerable section of the better-educated classes of society, who are in deadly antagonism to the despotic authority exercised by imperial officials and the secret police. There is no doubt of the existence of a secret revolutionary tribunal—a committee which professes to try and sentence the higher officials for acts of cruelty or oppression. This committee, which may have a single head, evidently commands the adhesion of many persons in all classes, even among the highest aristocracy, apparently by the aid of women so highly placed that they are not suspected, and commands agents who will risk death and commit assassinations when they are ordered. So far, no official programme of reform has been put forth as a demand, or any constitution insisted upon. The ordinary Nihilists offer the hand to the peasantry, and as a body plead for an ultra democracy, which would, in practice, create in Russia a regime of allied communes.

P. L.—You are quite in the right in holding that the surest step to success in a dramatic career is to go on the stage in minor roles and work one's way onward by diligent and faithful study. Some of the most glaring failures on the stage in late years have occurred in the cases of ladies who, having won a name on the platform, have ambitiously aspired to stalk forward at a bound to the queenly honors of the drama, thus thrusting aside those who have labored conscientiously for years to approach nearer their ideal of perfection. No one can hope to succeed in any calling, however humble, who does not start rightly and climb the ladder to reputation and independence by continuous toil, being content to mount upwards step by step. We would also advise you to become the pupil of some competent actor, who can give you the benefit of a personal experience and artistic culture. Also, make an opportunity to join a dramatic association, if you have leisure, before treading on the public boards. This will give you that practical familiarity with the details of stage life, as well as that confidence in facing an audience, only to be acquired by practice, and so help materially toward obtaining a foothold at a theatre. It is only in exceptional cases that managers pay good salaries, and an actor has to be content with minor roles till his abilities command an audience and an enviable income. Do not be afraid of working too hard; neither be ashamed to take humble positions. If your abilities lie in that way, you will advance rapidly enough for your own professional good.

THE OLD YEAR.

BY W. W. LORD.

Out in the snow and chilling rain,
Our friend, the Old year died,
With love and hope, joy and pain,
And mortal love and pride.

Bright Spring, with all her birds and flowers,
Her meadows decked in green;
Her morning sun and evening showers,
Made earth a happy place I ween.

And summer, in her rosy glow,
Her bow of promise on the hilltops bowed;
Her gentle zephyrs sighing low,
Like angel whispers from a cloud.

And Autumn laden with her sheaves,
Came softly in the mellow light;
Crowned the glory of her frost-kissed leaves,
And harvest moon so bright.

And winter, with its naked grove,
And muffled streams and drifted snow;
The cold stars of the heavens above,
And barren fields and dells below.

Yes, he is dead—a year of time,
With many hopes of ours,
Bound in a book of tender rhyme,
Holding the scent of faded flowers.

Not His Style.

BY M. E. S.

NEW YEAR'S EVE, and nearly midnight. In a brougham, outside a large house at Kensington, sits a golden-haired girl muffled in a long white wrap, and looking at her with very intent eyes as he stands on the curb, his arms resting on the carriage door, is a good-looking man in evening dress.

"In spite of your apparent indifference, I believe you are sorry you are going," he says to her in a low tone, as the strains of a waltz float out on to the frosty air and the girl bends forward and looks almost regretfully at the house whence the sounds proceed. "We might have had another, or even two more dances together if you had not hurried away so. You are a too-punctual Cinderella."

"I could not well stay longer. Auntie is tired—so tired that she forgot her precious brooch! I suppose she cannot find it, she is so long in coming."

"All the better for me," he returns significantly.

"It makes me very uncomfortable to see you standing there in the cold. I do wish you could go in!" she says lightly.

"Standing in the light of your eyes," he returns, "I am indifferent to cold. I wonder when we shall meet again, Miss Dudley? It must be soon. Do you think Mrs.—your aunt will give me permission to call? I must ask her."

"What is the name of that waltz? How pretty it is!" the girl says hurriedly; and, as he answers, the door of the house behind him is opened wider, to give egress to an elderly lady wrapped in furs, who runs nimbly down the steps.

"Found it at last!" she says in a flurried tone; with a bow to the man who has politely opened the carriage door for her, she adds stiffly, "So sorry to have kept you waiting!"—then she steps in, and they are whirled away before he has time to ask permission to call—before he remembers that he does not even know the elder lady's name, for he has never met her and her niece before.

As he re-enters his sister's house however, he thinks contentedly—

"But I can soon find out all about them from Nellie. That girl was the flower of the gathering to-night. I never saw such eyes—golden-brown—so expressive, too! Quite the nicest girl I ever met—so amusing! I wonder where Nellie picked them up.

"Once or twice she looked rather surprised, I thought, when she saw how I was devoting myself to her new friend—the darling."

Before he leaves the young man tries to get near his sister; but her duty as hostess kept her so much engaged that he has not an opportunity of putting the question he wishes.

A few days elapse before he sees her again, and then it is only for a hurried adieu before he starts on an unexpected but necessary visit to New York; and, when he returns five weeks later, his sister has either forgotten or pretends to have forgotten everything in connection with Miss Dudley.

She does not even remember the young lady's name. He is annoyed, for the girl charmed him very much; and he has, too, the uncomfortable notion that she must have expected to see him again.

He said so many pretty things to her—and meant them—and tried hard to make her understand how deep an impression she had made upon his hitherto unimpressionable heart.

He little dreams that the girl never thinks of him without an indignant flush mantling her fair cheeks, and that she was lectured for encouraging the attentions of so unprincipled a flirt as himself.

* * * * * *

Two years and a half later. A prettily-built country villa, with a lawn sloping away from the French window to a gate leading into a private lane whence the high road is gained.

At the open door of the house, full in the rays of the afternoon sun, stands a happy-faced bearded young man, whose brown eyes rest contentedly upon a couple who are chatting animatedly, as they sit under a shady beech on the lawn. One is a plump dark-haired little woman, with a pale pretty face and laughing blue eyes. Bertie Neville—the man standing at the door—still thinks his wife the most charming woman he has ever met.

Her companion is a tall, well-built, gentlemanly-looking man, with close-cut dark hair, a moustache that does not hide his somewhat cynical mouth, and a pair of gray-blue eyes that are capable of much and varied expression.

"And so you do not admire useful, energetic, practical women?" Mrs. Neville is saying. "I am afraid your ideal is of the dolly order—perfectly helpless, but ornamental—and I do not number such a woman among my acquaintances down here. How shall I cater for your amusements? I am very sorry, but my dearest friend is just one of those women who are not your style; and she has the run of the house."

"Surely you do not think me a prig, Mrs. Neville? Has Bertie given you such a bad opinion that——"

"Bertie only told me that you were his best friend, and that I was to do everything in my power to make your visit a pleasant one. How am I to do that when a woman of your style is lacking?"

"My dear Mrs. Neville, do let me assure you that I came down only with the thought of spending the time quietly with your husband and yourself."

"Well, Conny will not bore you."

"Conny?"

"Yes—the friend I mentioned just now. She is our rector's only daughter—not his child; he has a son, Bob—and she is all you do not admire. Ours is not a large parish, but there is plenty to do in it; and, as Mr. Ludlow's stipend is very small, he increases it by farming two or three hundred acres of land, in which he is assisted by Bob. Consequently Conny is always busy. She visits the poor and sick, manages the charity club and her father's house, superintends the dairy, keeps the farm accounts and a poultry run—which answers very profitably—and does—oh, all sorts of things."

"Is loud-voiced, rough-handed, prim, and addicted to stuff-gowns and clumsy boots in the bargain!" is Mr. Crosse's fastidious mental addition. Aloud he says drily, "She must be worth knowing."

"You might find her a pleasant change but for your objection to her style. She is different from the girls with whom you are accustomed to mix. I assure you, I found her to be so after my return from town last month. I was staying with my cousins—four of them—and the chief topics of conversation between them and their fashion plate girl friends were dress, tennis, and their violin lessons. I found it rather monotonous.

"More suitable subjects to girls than the woman's rights question, political economy, and so on," returns Leicester Crosse, with a smile. "As to tennis and the violin, each is a craze that will have its day. Miss Ludlow is, I presume, superior to both?"

"To the violin certainly; but she is a good tennis player, though she hasn't time to play much."

"And how old is this strong-minded lady?"

"Twenty-three."

"So young!"—in surprise.

"Yes—Bob is two years older. You will like Bob, and his father, too. You may see Conny by-and-by, for she has driven into town, and is going to bring me back some books.

Mr. Crosse is not by any means elated at this prospect and gladly changes the subject.

Later, when dinner is over, Mrs. Neville leaves the two men to discuss their claret, old times, or other matters, at their pleasure; and an hour passes before Bertie thinks of leading the way to the drawing room.

As he quietly opens the door, they both hear the clear ringing tones of a woman's voice saying—

"I gave her notice at once: I would sooner suffer any inconvenience than to be continually finding fault, continually met with excuses. Besides the girl is sulky, and, if there is one thing more than another that interferes with my peace of mind, it is a sulky face!"

"Quite autocratic! It is the strong-minded young person, I suppose," thinks Mr. Crosse, with a sneer; though when he is in her presence, he fancies he has been premature in coming to a conclusion, for, instead of the prim hard-visaged young person in stuff garments whom he expected to see, a tall refined-looking girl, in a cooling green and white dress, with a quantity of pale golden hair wound round her stately head, which is covered by a large white hat, turns a frank smiling face, sunburned and rather freckled, but charming for all that, towards them.

"Hat on! Not going to stay, Conny?" is Bertie's unceremonious greeting as he shakes hands with the girl and proceeds to introduce his friend. "How is that?"

"A pretty row!" she returns, bowing to Leicester, at whom she scarcely glances. "Bob sold some bullocks in a hurry this morning, and thinks he has sustained a loss by the transaction—says he shall not rest until I have gone through the books and satisfied him; so I must go quickly—indeed if I hadn't promised, I shouldn't have dropped in at all."

"How about your ducks?" Sold any!" asks Mrs. Neville.

"Yes—all that brood of white ones, to Colonel Clarkson, at a fair profit."

Mrs. Neville laughs, so does her husband; but Miss Ludlow is unmoved by their amusement as she adds—

"I must be off, Rose!"

"We will go down to the gate with you," Rose returns, leading the way out through the open window. "Will you come and spend to-morrow evening with us?"

"Sorry I can't, dear. I have promised to go to the Stanleys to-morrow evening, and on Friday to the school house meeting, to talk over the annual treat. You might join us; we shall be glad of suggestions for the children's entertainment."

As he follows the two girls, Mr. Crosse wonders if he can possibly have met this graceful stately young woman on any previous occasion.

He is almost sure he has, though he cannot recollect where. At that moment Miss Ludlow turns to ask him if this is his first visit to High Wick.

He replies in the affirmative as he glances at her quickly, wondering if she too thinks they have met before.

"Then, if you are an admirer of country scenery, you will be charmed with ours," she remarks.

Outside the high gate stands a light well-appointed dog cart, with a pretty little mare between the shafts; and just under the mare's nose lies a golden-brown collie, which gets up lazily and wags its tail as Mr. Neville greets it with "Hi, Jock, old boy."

Miss Ludlow shakes hands with her friends, and to Leicester she says—

"Perhaps, in a day or two, Mr. Crosse, you will give my father the pleasure of showing you over Bob's model farm—he is so proud of it."

Leicester murmurs that it will afford him very great pleasure, while Bertie says laughingly—

"I'll bring him over, never fear. How am I to amuse him? There is nothing to do but ride or drive during this July weather."

"And fish," adds the girl, as she smoothes the creases out of her long tan gloves, gathers up the reins, and lightly swings herself up into the dog cart. "Have you tried the Mill Lane stream yet? Bob tells me the trout swarm there. I had a mind to take a turn myself, but have not had an opportunity."

"Are you then a disciple of the gentle Izaak's?" asks Leicester, with amusement.

"She pretends to be," Bertie answers mischievously. "I meet her occasionally on her way to the stream, with a rod and a book and Jock here to scare away the rats and snakes, but I have never heard of any result in the shape of trout. It is my firm impression that the book plays a larger part in the expedition than the fishing rod."

"You horrid tease!" Mrs. Neville cries; but Constance only laughs as she turns her horse's head and drives away in the summer dusk.

As the others saunter back to the house, Bertie remarks amusedly.

"Colonel Clarkson is at his old game again. You see, Rose, he who loves me loves my—ducks in this instance."

"Yes," Mrs. Neville answers complacently; "but Conny will refuse him again. She has a soul above an old stick with fifteen hundred a year."

"You would rather she became a young man's slave, you goose."

"I could not imagine Miss Ludlow becoming any man's slave," Leicester says involuntarily.

"No—but she would do anything in the word for any one she loved," returns Rose.

Up to the present Mr. Crosse has been agreeably disappointed; and, in spite of her personal attractions, Miss Ludlow is so decidedly the reverse of his style in her tastes and occupations that his interest is not even aroused. He has a dim idea that Mrs. Neville imagines it might be, and is amused at the notion.

If she only knew how many fancies he had had, she would not for a moment entertain the idea of his falling a victim to the charms of this country friend of hers. Besides, he had not come to High Wick to dance attendance upon any girl, but to see his old friend and to seek a little relaxation from business cares, which have been pressing rather heavily upon him lately, owing to the illness of his senior partner in the large engineering firm of Kendrick & Crosse.

* * * * * *

Two days pass before Bertie takes his friend to the parsonage; but they stroll over in the morning of the third day, and, on arrival are shown into the drawing-room, to await Miss Ludlow, who, the servant tells them, is now returning from the field where her master and his son are busy.

Leicester looks with some curiosity around the daintily-ordered room, and recognizes that its appointments are quite in keeping with a fastidious lady's taste, and that it corresponds with Miss Ludlow's appearance if it does not correspond with her occupations.

When Miss Ludlow comes in, looking dainty and cool in a white dress, she welcomes them composedly.

She asks after Rose, and then tells them that her father and Bob are busy with their field of hay, but that they will be into luncheon in ten minutes, and advises her visitors not to go down to the field yet, as the heat is so intense there.

"As I don't mind the heat and Crosse does, I'll go, Neville, and you two will have time to make friends while I find the rector."

He goes, not quite to the satisfaction of the other two, for Leicester thinks it will be rather a bore to make conversation for the country girl whose tastes he does not understand.

Besides, her coolness piques him. He is accustomed to being made much of by women, while Constance herself does not care to make friends with the man of whose flirting propensities she has been warned.

As she seats herself in a low chair near the window, leaning back with her hands clasped in her lap, he says quickly—

"Miss Ludlow, you remind me of some one I know."

"Do I?"—turning her beautiful brown eyes upon him with perhaps a slight deepening of the color in her cheeks.

"Yes; but I cannot think of whom. Can you help me?"

"Perhaps I remind you of—myself."

"Yourself?" he ejaculates; but, as she speaks again a light breaks in upon him, and she cannot mistake the expression of gladness that irradiates his dark face.

"Yes—myself. Two years ago last New Year's Eve, when I was in town, I went with auntie to a dance at your sister's, and I believe I danced twice with you.

"Is it you indeed at last? I thought we were never to meet again. Do you know that I went to America within a week of that night?"

Then he tells her how it was that they did not meet again; but he is not quite flattered by the coolness with which she receives the information.

Still he feels that it will be easier to get on with her now that he knows that she can dance and enjoy herself like other girls, and that she is the very one who made a deeper impression upon him in a single night than any other girl has done in all his life.

"It is no wonder I could not make my sister understand whom I was inquiring about," he adds; "I always spoke of you as 'Miss Dudley,' as you were introduced to me."

"That is a mistake often made with our name," she says.

After this their conversation runs smoothly, and by the time the three men come in for luncheon they are apparently good friends.

A month passes, and, though Constance

allows no temptation to interfere with her round of duties, she and Leicester see a great deal of each other, especially as Mr. Ludlow's liking for his neighbor's friend increases, and Leicester is naturally often at the parsonage. He is conscious that the charm Constance wove around him two years ago is being woven around him again, though he does not believe Constance is doing it designedly. She never tries to attract him to her side.

Mrs. Neville looks on and privately tells her husband that she sees "how the land lies."

He laughs, and says that she is mistaken—that Leicester has not lived thirty-three years without being captivated to be caught at last by a country girl.

"Caught by a country girl indeed!" echoes Mrs. Neville indignantly. "As if Constance was angling for him. It is not Constance who is making herself conspicuous by her behavior. And, if your friend means nothing by it, I am sorry he came here. What right has he to monopolise Conny in the fashion he does, keeping off would-be husbands?"

"My darling"—insinuatingly—"you have maintained hitherto that those self-same would-be husbands were not half good enough for her."

"That is one thing, Bertie"—severely"I am talking about another. If your friend is not in earnest, he ought to be ashamed of himself, though I do not for a moment suppose that Conny cares whether he has intentions or not, for I have heard her say that neither love nor money would induce her to marry a town bred man."

"Consistency, thy name is woman," is Bertie's laughing retort.

But it does much more than amuse Leicester, who overhears it as he is on the point of entering the room.

"It proves a shock to him; for, after much deliberation, he has just decided that he cannot leave High Wick without braving Conny's apparent indifference and asking the girl he loves to be his wife. Until quite recently he has hesitated through fear of being made a fool of. How can he carry out his intentions now in the face of Mrs. Neville's disclosure?

Wavering between the promptings of love and pride, he passes the next twenty-four hours in anything but an enviable frame of mind. In the end pride triumphs, and he is very cool to Constance when she spends the evening before his departure at High Wick.

"He has amused himself," she thinks bitterly, "and is afraid I may imagine he meant more than that; therefore he is determined to show me the real position. But he need not be alarmed."

Accordingly she talks to him freely about his departure, and she chats gaily with Rose and her husband, sings when they ask her, and is so exactly her usual self that Leicester is half mad at her indifference.

When she rises at half-past nine to go, Neville says—

"Rose put on a hat and a wrap, and we will walk down with Constance; the stroll will do you good."

"Yes, do Rose!" Constance urges; and Rose assents, though she is careful to slip her hand within her husband's arm as soon as they are out in the moonlit lane, so that Constance is compelled to follow with Leicester—much to her annoyance. She is glad when they reach the gate of her home.

"Good-bye, Miss Ludlow!" Leicester says stiffly, as he shakes her hand. "Thank you very much in helping to render my visit such a pleasant one! I trust we shall meet again soon."

"You are very kind," the girl answers, looking straight at him with one of the smiles that pique him so strangely. "Good-bye. I hope you will have a pleasant journey to-morrow."

"Thank you! I am sorry I hadn't the pleasure of seeing your father and brother again; please express my regrets to them." (Mr. Ludlow and Bob are away on business)

She bends her stately head and turns into the garden, and, as she enters the parsonage, her face is very pale and her beautiful eyes express a sadness that would have delighted the man who is walking back to High Wick, angry with her and the world in general, though he knows his pain and disappointment to be due only to his pride.

At breakfast the next morning Leicester decides to leave by the two o'clock train.

"I am sorry I missed saying good bye to Mr. Ludlow," he says to Mr. Neville. "Do you think there would be a chance of seeing him if we called on the way to the station?"

"It is doubtful," answers Neville." But why don't you run down about eleven o'clock, while I am busy with Reed? They are generally in then."

"Not a bad idea," returns Leicester, "I think I will."

One of the maids at the parsonage, in answer to Leicester's inquiry, tells him that Mr. Bob has started for town, but the master is about somewhere; she will find him. Meanwhile would he like to see Miss Ludlow?"

"Yes—if she is disengaged," he replies quietly.

After knocking unceremoniously at the door of the room where Conny is sitting, she opens it, and shows the visitor in without announcing him.

Miss Ludlow evidently supposes the intruder is a servant, for, without raising her head from the ledger over which she is busy, she puts up her hand to command silence for a moment.

So, feeling rather awkward—a novel sensation for him—Leicester stands still watching her.

Her profile is towards him, her golden head bent, her red lips moving, she wears a loose-fitting white holland gown, lightly gathered in at the waist by a knotted velvet ribbon.

Her sleeves are turned up above the wrist, disclosing more of her plump white arm than usual.

He is just thinking that her careless but becoming attire is not mean for visitors and that he may not be welcome, when she says aloud, in a rather troubled tone—

"One hundred and forty-seven pounds, nine shillings and threepence again; but I don't believe it is right. Now, Jane, what do you want?"—looking round.

As Leicester feared, a wave of color rushes over her cheeks as she rises and stands before him speechless.

"A thousand pardons, Miss Ludlow!" he exclaims. "I would not have intruded if——"

"It is all right, Mr. Crosse," she interrupts, quickly recovering herself as she holds out her hand; "you only startled me. I thought that it was Jane, and that you were half way on your journey to town."

"I should have been, but Neville persuaded me to go by the afternoon express; so I thought as I had half the day before me, I would try and see your father and Bob. But I fear that I am disturbing you," he adds, noting that she is pale and holds her head a trifle higher than usual; "perhaps I could find Mr. Ludlow."

"I don't think I am sorry to be disturbed;" and she laughs, her lustrous eyes meeting his. "The heat makes me disinclined to correct accounts and add up columns of figures this morning; I tried to do it because to-morrow will be market day."

"Why doesn't Bob do it?"

"Bob! Bob abominates figures; besides, he has so much else to do."

"I believe you have tired yourself out this morning; you are looking so pale and as if you had a headache," he says softly.

"I have," she answers, turning from him to close a book and replace it on a shelf. "And those tiresome figures have not improved it. I have actually added up one column four times; twice the result has been the same, and twice different."

"And now?"

"Oh, I am not satisfied yet I shall go over the columns again by and-by, when it is cooler and I have more patience."

"May I try to atone for my thoughtlessness in disturbing you by helping you? Do let me!"

She smiles, and, without a moment's hesitation, turns the ledger towards him. For a few seconds there is silence in the room while he runs his eye over the figures, and she stands behind his chair looking at him, as she does not look when there are others by too see.

"Your total is correct," he says, turning with a smile to glance up at her. Then he ejaculates in surprise, "Miss Ludlow!" for her lips are quivering, and though the lids are downcast, he can see that there are tears in her eyes.

"Is it not stupid," she exclaims, turning from him; "to think that I should have worried so for half an hour, and all the time—— Oh, it is absurd."

"Absurd? It is not absurd," he declares, gravely looking at her. But suddenly his gravity and wonderment give place to delight, and, springing to his feet, he stretches out his arms, draws her within them, and turns her face to his. "Darling," he whispers passionately, "I love you. Keep me as your book-keeper, will you. I will promise to be the most faithful, hard-working, and loving servant woman ever had. It was, I think, because I wanted to offer myself to you in some capacity or other that I came down this morning, but I was not quite sure."

"Perhaps you are not sure now," is the low reply, accompanied by a half-tearful, half laughing glance.

"Am I not? Look straight into my eyes Con darling, and you will not doubt any more than I do! And I have not been so doubtful of myself as of you, for you made an impression on me two years ago, while lately you have seemed to try by your coldness to efface it. Why was it?"

"Forgive me—I doubted your sincerity."

"And now?"

"I should not be here if I doubted it still"—for her arms still softly enclose her.

"Then you love me?"

She raises her eyes to his, and he reads the answer in them.

"My own. It is not customary, I believe, for persons employed in my capacity to draw any part of their salary in advance; but I hate custom—don't you, dearest?—and——" The laughing speech is not finished, for his lips are pressed to hers.

* * * * * *

At twenty minutes past two, Mr. Neville, having told his man to take the dog-cart back to the stable as Mr. Crosse has not yet returned, is standing at the dining room window, his hands in his pockets, arguing with his wife, who is lying back in her chair, her white hands idly clasped on her work, a mischievous expression on her pretty face.

"I don't care what you say, my dear, you don't know Crosse so well as I do. Neither Constance nor any other girl has detained him. It is more than likely that Mr. Ludlow was late, and he waited."

"But it would be very strange to lose his train just for that, when he was so anxious to go," Mrs. Neville persists.

"That's nothing—he is rather changeable."

"Then, if he is so changeable, dear"—very slyly and very sweetly—"why should he not change his mind in respect of the style of girl he admires?"

"Have your own way, Rose; but, because a man is changeable as regards every day trifles, he is not of necessity so in important matters."

"Ah, there is the fickle minded recreant sauntering up to the gate, and stroking his moustache as if he were mightily well pleased with himself. How I hate to see him. I could box his ears with pleasure!"

"Don't get into a rage, darling," Mr. Neville remonstrates, as she throws her work down vindictively upon the table, "just because he declines to see Constance with your eyes."

"Leicester walks into the room.

"I am awfully sorry, old fellow," he begins apologetically; but, as he apparently finds some little difficulty in proceeding Mrs. Neville's wrath subsides, and she looks up at him with renewed interest.

"We detest a second leave taking," she says dryly; "it confuses the clear echo of the first."

"That's just it, Mrs. Neville!" and he laughs outright. "My second leave taking has confused the clear echo of the first to such a degree that I hardly know how to explain to you that I should like to stay until Monday, after all, if you will have me, as—as Miss Ludlow has promised me a trial in the capacity of book-keeper, provided her father——"

"I knew it!" exclaims Mrs. Neville, with a triumphant little shriek of laughter. "Oh, you men, how amusing you are."

* * * * * *

Mr. Crosse is not required to enter upon his duties as soon as he wishes, owing to his beautiful employer's reluctance to relinquish hers—indeed he has so much difficulty in persuading her to name an early date for the ratification of their agreement that he threatens to appeal to her father, but is spared the necessity by the announcement Bob makes one morning in November, to the effect that he has plighted his troth to a dear little girl who writes a neat hand and has almost as good a head for figures as Constance, so that his sister is at liberty to become her admirer's slave as soon as she likes.

Having no excuse to urge against it, Constance is bound to agree with her lover that the next New Year's Eve will be quite apropos for their marriage, since it will be the anniversary of their first meeting.

Consequently, when the auspicious day arrives, Mr. Ludlow does a little arithmetic himself by adding two members to his family—giving away his beloved daughter and taking the substitute Bob provides with as good a grace as he can.

The Gipsy's Head.

BY S. U. P.

THEY were all gone, of course. Who cared to stay after the reading of such a will as that?

I remained because I had nowhere else to go; and old Goodacres remained, I suppose to see how I should take. I had always liked him until now, and now I naturally enough owed him a grudge. He might have influenced my uncle—he might have prevented the making of that shameful will—he might have suggested how hard, how cruel it was to me.

And now he was waiting to see if I should explode over it; at any rate he should not have that satisfaction.

I looked up at him, he was standing opposite to me at the fireplace, leaning his elbow on the mantlepiece and gazing at me with a pitying expression.

It angered me and I burst forth with a shout of wild laughter that echoed through the empty room, making the old lawyer raise his hand in deprecation.

"Fifty pounds for a mourning ring!" I shouted, laughing as if at the best joke in the world. "Fifty pounds for a mourning ring. I shall go forth clad in it, as proud as a Fiji islander of his beads and feathers. All I shall need will be a missionary to convert me to a grateful frame of mind."

"Fred! Fred! for Heaven's sake! What will the servants think!" expostulated the old solicitor.

"What do I care? What can it matter to me? What have I to do with servants? I am a rich man and they know it as well as you do. I possess some capital clothes, and fifty pounds for a mourning ring."

"I must go if you talk like that, and I am only waiting to see if I can be of use to you," said Mr. Goodacres gently.

"Thanks! of what use? Are you going kindly to offer to select the ring? I am afraid I can't afford to pay you a commission. You won't find it worth while."

"Fred, I know you must be very sore about this. My boy, it is not my fault. I implored your uncle, but could not change his resolution. Don't quarrel with me, I will help you if I can."

"I daresay," I replied. "You'll offer me a desk in your office, I suppose. It won't pay. No one will be able to read my handwriting; I can't always do so myself."

"There are other things open to you besides a desk in my office. If you'll only put your shoulder——"

"Don't!" I interrupted. "Please don't! If there is one expression I hate more than any other it is that. For every wheel in the present day there are at least fifty shoulders struggling, straining, thrusting each other down in order to get their turn; and the one lucky wretch finds that it takes the whole of his energies for the rest of his days to keep the vile thing going."

"If you wont talk rationally Fred, I shall go," said Mr. Goodacres rising.

"Go then. I am talking rationally, in my own opinion. But if you want to talk I will listen to you."

He sat down again—the day came when I wondered at his patience—he fixed his quiet, kind eyes upon me, and for some moments we remained, gazing at each other in silence.

"What are you going to do?" he said at last.

"What can I do?" I replied. "I am too old for the army or navy, unless I enlist or go before the mast; unfit for church or law, writing a bad hand and hating accounts."

"I thought you were clever at languages."

"Clever? certainly not. I know enough to be able to blunder through the literature of several countries; but I don't think I could correspond correctly even in French."

"You paint well, at any rate."

"Yes, for an amateur. I must take to that, I suppose. Just Fancy me a drawing master. Do you think they'd let such a wolf as I am into a ladies' school, to harry their sheep fold and flutter their dove cot for them?"

I rose with a smile as I spoke, and glanced at my reflection in the mirror. "Handsome Fred" was my nickname amongst my intimate friends, and I could not help knowing I was good looking. "Six feet of beauty and idleness," my old uncle once told me.

Why did he not check the idleness then if he meant to leave me only fifty pounds for a mourning ring?

"One thing does not seem to enter your mind," said Mr. Goodacres. "You might marry for money."

"Never!" I said. "That's a degradation I hope never to stoop to. It is base enough when a woman does it, it is loathsome in a man."

"I am glad to hear you say so, but it is not the opinion of the world," replied the lawyer smiling. "I suppose you will take to art then. Well! you shall paint some pictures for me on commission.

"I'll do nothing of the kind thank you all the same. I'll stand or fall by my own merits. I shall exhibit before I sell anything. My pictures shall not be bought out of charity. I'll take a studio and paint something for the winter exhibition at Barkham, and after that I'll take orders. When my fortune is made," I added with a grim smile, "I'll buy that mourning ring."

Old Goodacres rose, and, wringing my hand, said: "Good-bye, Fred. Remember, if ever you want a friend, come to me." Then he too went away.

How shall I tell the story of the next six months? I worked hard and painted two pictures for the Barkham Exhibition. One was refused the other not sold. When the exhibition closed I sold the pair to a dealer for ten pounds—the frames had cost five.

I well remember that evening. It was bitterly cold and I sat by my small fire, looking at the ten sovereigns I had received for the pictures.

Since my uncle's death I had avoided all my wealthy friends; they had looked upon me as his heir in his lifetime, and I would not run the risk of letting any of them give me the cold shoulder. But my old school comrade, Archie Burton, had actually refused to be "shunted," as he expressed it.

"Hang it, man! You'd have come to me if I had been down on my luck," he said

And on this particular evening he walked into my room when I was in the act of passing the ten sovereigns from one hand to the other; deriving, I suppose, a melancholy satisfaction from the faint musical jingle.

"Flush of cash, eh?" he said. "Have you struck oil?"

"Indeed, no," I replied. "Look! They constitute my worldly wealth. I must get some more soon somehow, even if it be 'over the devil's back.'"

"Don't say that, old fellow. Remember the rest of the proverb."

"It is welcome to go for all I care, if I only have the fingering of it first," I replied gloomily.

"Nonsense, Fred. Let me have a look at the thing you have here. You never will sell anything to me. What are you sitting in the dark for?"

He turned up the gas and sauntered round the room with his hands in his pockets.

"I don't care for those landscapes, they're too green," he said. "But I like this head. You never painted it, did you? It's so confoundedly dingy; it must be old."

"It is not old," I said, "only I'm a fool. I tried to paint a gipsy, and that's the result."

"You're not a fool, Fred, except for talking in that style. The eyes are magnificent. Indeed, the whole thing is a great deal better than half the pictures in the picture gallery old Burlingstone is making for himself in the white stucco palace he has built outside Barkham. How come you to paint it on an old canvas?" he said, taking up the picture and looking at the back.

"I got a number of them cheap," I said. "The fronts are all right."

"Yes, the front is right enough and the dirty back adds to the 'ancient mastery' look. Burlingstone would give a heap of money for it if it were really old. He fancies himself a connoisseur," added Archie with a laugh.

"Is he?" said I.

"Not a bit of it. I sometimes think he buys his pictures by the yard. The chief fault he would find with this is that it is only head and shoulders."

When Archie was gone the demon entered into me. I took down my gipsy, and looked at her magnificent pleading eyes.

I remember that I had cleaned a daub of a windmill off that canvas, and the whole thing arranged itself in my mind at once. The next day found me at the stucco-palace, as Archie had irreverently styled the splendid mansion Mr. Burlingstone, the rich Barkham manufacturer, had built for himself. I craved permission to see him on important business. I exhibited my gipsy's head, and informed him that, being but a poor artist, I had purchased an old canvas to paint upon, and that when I cleaned off the landscape which had been upon it, I had found this beautiful head painted beneath.

"Ah! Just like that portrait of Shakspeare that has been discovered," he explained with ready credulity, and carried off my gipsy to the window to look at her more closely.

"Pity there is not more of it," he said, at length. "Never mind, I like it. And you are willing to sell this, Mr. Armstrong?"

"Quite willing," I replied.

"Well, I like it, although it's so small. How much, Mr. Armstrong?"

"Twenty five pounds," I replied

In ten minutes more I was walking down the avenue empty-handed, and with three bank notes in my breast pocket.

From that moment times changed. I painted with a feverish energy, caring little whether I succeeded or not. I felt that I had sold myself to the devil for twenty-five pounds—dirt cheap for an Armstrong—but my purchaser was liberal now at any rate.

I took the green out of these landscapes somehow, and, when toned down with russets and browns, they sold well. I had three pictures in the Barkham gallery next year. All were sold at the private view.

My small studio was exchanged for a handsome suite of rooms. I was the fashion, but I was miserable.

The kind confiding face of the gray-haired old man, looking down with a smile upon my gipsy, whose pleading eyes seemed to protest against being made an innocent party to a fraud, seemed to haunt me.

At last I could not endure it any longer; in bitter shame and humiliation I wrote to him, telling him my whole story, and enclosing twenty-five pounds, implored him to take back the money and return me the picture.

In two days the answer came; it ran thus:

"My Dear Sir—I, too, have known trouble, and can sympathise with all you tell me. I have shown my beautiful 'old picture' too far to many people to care to part with it now. So please keep your money and hold your tongue.

"Yours faithfully,

"J. Burlingstone."

I sent the money at once to the orphan asylum to which my uncle had left the whole of the fortune I had expected would be mine, and felt as if I had made friends with him, too, now.

My success had absolutely frightened me.

It seemed like the prosperity granted by a Mephistopheles to a Faust.

The day after I despatched the money to that asylum, was the anniversary of my uncle's death. It was five years since I had received the fifty pounds, which I certainly did not spend on a mourning ring.

I was sitting at my easel, trying to paint a portrait of the old man from memory, and thinking tenderly of all his goodness to me in my homeless, friendless boyhood, when I received a visit from Mr. Goodacres. He seemed pleased when he saw what I was doing, and sat down beside me.

"Did it ever strike you, Fred," he said, "that your uncle must have possessed much more money than the $200,000 he left to that orphanage?"

"Never," I replied indifferently. "I never knew what he had, and it never occurred to me to wonder."

"He left $600 000 besides that," said Mr. Goodacres, quietly.

"What became of it?" I asked in open-eyed amazement.

"He left it in my hands to accumulate at compound interest for you, begging me not to give it to you for five years unless you proved utterly incapable of doing anything for yourself, in which case you were to have it at once and make ducks and drakes of it if you pleased. In any case, he said, see that my poor boy does not want. I wish him to learn—not to suffer."

I bent my head o r my hands and cried like a child, and dear old Goodacres went and stood at the window with his back to me and pretended not to see.

How could I ever repent deeply enough of the bitter, angry thoughts of those past five years?

"Fred," he said at last, "shall I select you a mourning ring?"

"Yes," I replied. "Give five times fifty pounds for it at least. A single diamond set in black enamel 'In grateful remembrance.'"

"All right," he replied with a smile. "I shall charge you five pounds commission."

* * * * * *

Little more remains to be told.

Miss Burlingstone, the gentlest and sweetest of girls, makes the best and dearest of wives. The gipsy's head still hangs in the gallery at Burlingstone, but its story is no longer a secret. Grandpapa told it himself at dinner on the day young Fred was christened, and every year May makes me send $250 to the orphanage.

"You must, dear," she says, "it is interest on that $125 that you got 'over the devil's back.' I don't quite like the sound of the proverb, but it's a true one, nevertheless."

A Turkish "At Home."—When a Turk has disposed of his visitors, he goes into his haremlik to dine or breakfast, first removing his babouches. The custom of removing one's shoes before entering a room, is not a religious superstition, but comes of the necessity for keeping carpets clean, seeing that they fulfil the purpose of chairs, tables and sofas in other countries.

The ladies' room may be furnished like a Parisian boudoir; but custom is stronger than fashion, and the Turks of both sexes like to recline or sit cross legged on the floor.

Their carpets are curiously soft and thick, and those over the doors shut out all draughts and noises. Through the open windows that look out upon the garden comes a scent of roses and the hum of bees, mingled with the laughter of children, who are playing on a well-trimmed lawn, under the eyes of the dark-eyed Circassian nurses.

The mistress of the harem—the Bukul Hanum (great lady), to give her her full title—dresses much like an English lady nowadays, reads French novels, and plays the piano, though she dons her native costume upon state occasions, such as the chalvas. Chalve means a cake, but has come to designate a party at which that dainty is eaten, just as we say "tea" for "tea party" here.

When a Turkish lady gives a chalva her husband is excluded while the strange women are in the house.

These guests begin to arrive about 6, accompanied by their maid servants and negroes, carrying lanterns, and bringing their children with them.

Closely muffled, they divest themselves of their babouches in an ante-room, and put on delicate slippers, which they have brought with them in bags. The reception rooms are brilliantly lighted up with pink wax candles, and scented with fragrant pastilles.

There is no kissing or hand shaking between the hostess and her guests, but each lady as she comes in, lifts her hand gracefully to her heart, her lips and her brow, which means "I am devoted to you with heart, mouth and mind."

This mode of salutation is very pretty. The greetings being ended, the company seat themselves on chairs, if there be any Frank ladies present; if not, they betake themselves to the divans and carpets, and the cake eating begins.

Disappointed.—A cruel disappointment, says a San Francisco newspaper, was that of a party of ladies and gentlemen exploring the depths of the Bonanza mines the other day.

It was arranged that a lunch was to be eaten on the one thousand-five hundred-foot level, and therefore at noon four large baskets full of dainties both liquid and substantial were lowered to the depths.

These descended first among a group of honest Cornish miners, delving on the one thousand two hundred foot level, who, in the absence of any instructions, decided, after much discussion, that it must be a national holiday, or something of the kind, above ground, and that this was a kindly little compliment from the Bonanza princes. They therefore fell to on the eatables with much energy. When the exhausted excursionists inquired for their refreshments, they discovered only the empty hampers and about twenty brawny miners, full of chicken salad, champagne, mashed ices, and other things, dancing a demoniac Cornish breakdown by the fitful light of the flaring torch.

Imaginary troubles and ailments, abundant among a certain class of people, are generally well aired, and are as depressing to those who have to listen to them as real ones; yet most of them, if denied utterance, would soon melt away.

At Home and Abroad.

The two oldest secret trade processes now in existence are considered to be the manufacture of Chinese red, or vermilion, and that method of inlaying the hardest steel with gold and silver, which seems to have been practised at Damascus ages ago, and is known only to the Syrian smiths and their pupils even to this day.

Recent wounds should be dressed, it is said, with a thin layer of ashes prepared extempore by incinerating some cotton stuff or linen. The ashes mingling with the blood form a protecting scurf under which the lesion heals very rapidly. This simple and convenient method has been practised by the Cossack peasantry from time immemorial, and, it is said, that of twenty-eight cases of cuts, stabs, crushes, etc., twenty six quickly healed without any suppuration. It is also recommended that dirty-looking wounds should be washed with a boracic solution before being dressed.

An automatic shoe black is the latest novelty. The machine has been designed and patented. When you want your boots cleaned, you sit down on the seat provided and place your foot through an opening in the casing on to a foot-rest. Then you put the inevitable penny in the slot, and an electro-motor is set in operation, which in turn, actuates five pair of brushes. The frame carrying these brushes passing lengthwise over each boot in turn. The first pair of brushes remove the dirt from the boots, the second pair is supplied with blacking by rotating against a blacking-case, and the three other pairs do the polishing.

The recent inquiry which has been made as regards the destinies of the young ladies who take academical honors has not resulted in a satisfactory manner. The lady president of Newnham College has been able to account for seven hundred and twenty "sweet girl graduates" who have passed examinations entitling them to a degree. Seventeen have died, and thirty-seven have returned to their native lands, being foreigners. Of the remaining number, two hundred and thirty are living at home; one hundred and eight are married; two hundred and forty five are engaged in teaching; five have devoted themselves to medicine; two have become missionaries; one a bookbinder, and another a market gardener; the rest are untraceable.

Paris has adopted a system of lighting the sewer tunnels by electric arcs and a succession of mirrors, so that any particular spot can be illuminated for repairs, etc. The idea can not be called new, as it is believed that a similar method was in use ages ago in the interior of the buildings of Egypt. The ancient Egyptians appear to have been expert in the manipulation of beams of light in this way as a part of their religious ceremonials; and it is supposed that by such means they got sufficient light into the recesses of their buildings so as to enable them to utilize the external sunlight for the purpose of painting their colored pictures upon the walls of chambers in which lamps, with their smoke, were not, it seems, allowed to be used.

A scientist accounts for the interesting natural soap mines at Owen's Lake, California, by the following theory: The water of the lake contains, he says, a strong solution of both borax and soda. In the water a curious specimen of grub breed by millions. These grubs go through their various transformations, and finally emerge as short-winged, heavy-bodied flies, very fat and oily. They live but a few days, dying and falling into the lake in such numbers as to be frequently washed ashore in layers more than a foot thick. The oily substance of the dead flies blend with the alkali of the borax and soda, and the result is a layer of pure soap, corresponding in thickness to the drift strata of the dead flies. These strata, repeated year after year, have formed the celebrated "Soap Banks," of Owen's Lake, where for a number of years, a large body of men have been regularly at work.

How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars reward for any case of catarrh that can not be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY & CO., Props., Toledo, O.

We the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions, and financially able to carry out any obligations made by their firm.

West & Truax, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.
Walding, Kinnan & Marvin, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, Ohio

Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Price, 75c. per bottle. Sold by all Druggists. Testimonials free.

Our Young Folks.

THREE GRAWLIES.

BY S. U. W

FOR the first month or two Syb thought school was something new—great fun; but at the end of that time she began to think it was no fun at all—quite the reverse. She knew every corner of the room, and which was the nicest and which was the most unpleasant to stand in—the one where the ink was spilt, and the one where the mouse-hole was, and the corner behind Miss Brown's desk, where, if Miss Brown was not looking, one could see out of the side window into the fields.

Oh! it was so hard to be at school when the country was so full of flowers and butterflies. It made one quite naughty to be asked to learn lessons when there might be picnics in the garden at home with baby and the cat. Then one got so sleepy in the middle of the afternoon, when the sun was warm outside, and nobody was allowed to talk. Miss Brown would give a knock on the desk to rouse her up, and say—

"Syb, you lazy little thing! I don't like to go back to such old-fashioned ways, or you should wear a dunce's cap."

One day there was a lesson which Syb thought she could have learned much better out in the fields. It was all about caterpillars and butterflies and spiders.

"Oh dear!" thought the idle little girl, "what a lot Miss Brown has to say about grubs and creepy-crawleys. I thought it was enough to know the name of them. How tiresome it is that there is something to be learned about everything!"

While Miss Brown went on talking Syb found herself repeating, charmed with her own name for the lesson, "Grubs and creepy-crawleys! How horrid—all about creepy crawleys! What a nice name for it—Snubs and creepy snawleys: no, I mean cubs and greepy-grawleys. Oh dear! I can't say it now—creepy-crawleys!"

"Syb," said Miss Brown, "you are not listening. What did I say a Grawlie was?" Syb stood up, feeling very blank and helpless indeed.

"I don't know. I——"

"You what?"

"Please, Miss Brown, I never heard of such a thing as a Grawlie in all my life."

Some of the big girls began to laugh, because Syb, who was only six years old, said "All her life."

But Miss Brown said severely—

"Nonsense, child! Here is the corner, and here is the dunce's cap I promised you."

All the other children began asking what a Grawlie was, and they were not put in the corners; in fact, there would not have been corners enough to put them in.

When school was over, and all others were gone away, Syb was left in the empty room, with her pointed cap on her head, crying, "Boo-oo-oo! I don't know what a Grawlie is!"

Once, when she took her knuckles from her eyes and looked towards the open window, she caught sight of another pointed cap just disappearing outside, as if somebody had been peeping in over the window sill, and a voice said—

"Oh! I thought you were one of us, by your hat; but I see you are a little girl."

Syb ran to the window and looked out; but she could not see anybody. There was a spider making a web under the window, and there was a spray of bluebells. Oh, if she could only go home!

No sooner had she gone back to her place again than three of those very things she had got into trouble about—three nasty Grawlies—came and had a sort of public meeting, sitting on the bonding stone and grass under that very spray of bluebells.

They were a sort of fairy, that looked all spike and sting, and whirl and twirl. They had high pointed caps and their skirts went down into a long corkscrew tail, which they whisked about, hazy and cloudy, making a buzzing noise. They looked after all the grubs and creepy crawley things, and perhaps that was the reason why these queer elves were called Grawlies.

Perched there among the grass, they began to make a plot to catch a little girl and turn her into a Grawlie too.

"It would be very easy to change the one in the room there," they said, "if one began with her head."

"She is not very young, I hope?" said another. "Babies are the one thing in the world I have a horror of."

"Oh! babies—the stumbling, tumbling, squalling things! Don't mention them," gasped the others.

"The girl in there is six years old," said the first.

"Ah! then she won't watch to catch hold of one and put one in her mouth."

"Oh no! I wouldn't recommend a baby. She is past the age of screaming out loud. Oh, how those babies yell! I would run miles from them."

Little Syb had heard this much of the talk, quite against her will: the Grawlies spoke with such screeching voices, she could not help hearing. But she did not hear any more, because she threw off the dunce's cap, and ran out of the schoolroom, and got her hood and her cloak and her parasol, and ran away without leave and without asking. The door was at the other side of the house, and she hoped she would be able to get safe home before those three horrid things could find her.

But as she ran along the road a cloud of dust came sweeping past her, and there before her were the three Grawlies flying about, pointed caps and twirling tails, and all.

She tried her best to keep them off with her parasol.

"It won't do, little girl; it won't do," they said. "You must come along at once, and be a Grawlie."

She could not poke the parasol at all three of them together, so they soon caught her.

"Oh! please don't take me," she said. "I'll give you a penny each to go away."

They held her fast, and shook their heads and whisked their tails.

"Oh! please let me go, and I'll give you sixpence."

"It won't do, little girl. Come along, and be a Grawlie."

"Oh! please let me go, and I'll give you my curls."

"Ours are longer," said the Grawlies.

"Oh! please let me go, and you can have my dolls."

"We are much prettier ourselves," said the Grawlies.

While she begged like this they were walking her off, with their cloudy tails twisted round her, and they came to the garden of a house to let. Syb knew that garden, and had looked in at its gate many a time. Everything was overgrown with grass and weeds, and there was an old summer-house in the corner, smothered over the roof and down to the ground with ivy and trailing plants. Every leaf was eaten full of holes, and bridges swarmed about it.

"Aha!" said the Grawlies; "we do love summer-houses; they are especially built for all our insects, and the people soon find it out, and leave the insects comfortable. Come along in, my dear."

Syb was pushed and pulled in between the trailing branches. Everything was dark inside, with just a little green light through the leaves. She could not sit down, there were so many slugs on the benches, and there were cobwebs across her face, and the biggest spider she ever saw was spreading its legs about on the table.

"Oh! please let me go away," she cried.

"But you are just the little girl we want. We must have another Grawlie."

"Not me! I am afraid you will sting me, and you are so clammy, and your tails are so cob webby. Let me go, and I'll give you——"

She stopped to think. What could she give? Pence and sixpences seemed to be nothing to them. They do not want her curls, and they thought themselves nicer than dolls, and would not have them. What was there that she could promise them. The baby? Oh no! they disliked babies, and would run miles from one. Besides, she would not give the baby away to anyone in the world. Well, what about the cat? She could not bear to think of their taking away her dear pussy, that sat on the gate every day waiting for her. But they might have shares in the cat: they might go halves in the cat with her. Pussy was her very own, but they should not want to take their half away: and they could not possibly make a cat into a Grawlie. Oh! could not they though?

The spider on the table was beginning to move and was looking at her out of the corners of his eyes—and he had a great many eyes, too.

"Do let me go," she said, "and I'll tell you what I'll give you. I have a beautiful cat. It is a lovely white and gray one—my very own."

"Let us have the cat instead of you," they all said at once.

"Oh! no—not even to get away from you." She was ready to cry, but she would not sell her pet for her freedom.

"No; but won't half of my cat do? You must not take it away, but you and I can own the cat together."

The moment the offer was made, Syb was free. She rushed out through the worm eaten entrance of the summer-house, and away towards home as fast as she could.

After she went, the Grawlies had a dispute. No one had decided which half of the cat they were to have. Two of them wanted to own her head, but the other one had much better reasons for owning her tail.

"You see," said this Grawlie, "we might have begun with this little girl's head. I have seen her in a pointed cap, just like ours: but if we want to make the cat as like a Grawlie as we can, it will be much easier to begin with her tail. One has something to start with there, and we could make it long enough to whisk and curl about like ours."

The others agreed, and very soon Syb saw with alarm that the tail of her favorite was growing longer and longer. She measured it every day with her mother's inch tape, and there was no telling where it would stop. It was inconvenient for the poor cat, too; she might come into a room, and leave a yard and a half of her tail in the hall. Everybody had to take care going downstairs, because puss might have passed that way before them, and the last of her tail might not have gone down yet. The mice came and nibbled the tip, without knowing there was a cat at the other end of it. And Syb became very unhappy indeed.

"I never thought they could have done it," she sobbed. "They are making my poor pussy-cat into a Grawlie!"

All at once to the great relief of the whole family, pussy's tail began to shorten. The reason of this was that the three Grawlies had suddenly made up their minds that they would like to have a change and to have the other half instead.

When it was the usual length again, the little girl was so glad that she even took courage to write a message and to leave it in the worm-eaten summer house. It seemed to her better to make friends with these mischievous fairies, and then, perhaps, she thought, they would not play any more tricks with their half of the cat. It never came into her mind that they were only giving up one half to take the other, and that they had plotted to put a Grawlie's head on poor pussy.

Syb printed a message on her transparent slate, and put a white paper at the back to show up the printing:—

"Would you like to come to the nursery tea at half past four? I want you to promise me something about your half cat—I mean, all of our cat."

At nearly half past four the nursery tea was laid. Syb felt nervous and anxious. She had not told nurse yet. How could she tell her that the three Grawlies were coming?

"Nurse," she said; "I want to lay my doll's tea set, too."

"Oh! Miss Syb, don't make a bother this afternoon: I am in a hurry."

"But, nurse, please don't be vexed, and will you give us some jam? There are going to be three more to tea."

"Those Stubbs children again?"

"No, nurse, not the Stubbses; and if you please, nurse, I'd rather you don't see these three."

"Why?"

"You," she began timidly, "you might—because, nurse, you might be frightened."

"Frightened? You naughty child! What sort of children have you asked? Very rough, I suppose. Well, your mother is out to day, and we can't speak to her. But you must never do this kind of thing again. Are they boys or girls, Miss Syb? for if there are any boys coming, they must have the big thick cups that they can't break."

"They are not girls," said Syb.

"Then they are boys?"

"Oh, no!"

"What! Neither boys nor girls? Then you must have gone and asked big people to nursery tea?"

"No, not big; they are very little."

"Now, Syb, tell me at once," said nurse, getting cross. "Who are coming? Are they grown-up? How old are they?"

Syb shook her head seriously.

"I hope they won't grow any more, or they would be dreadful—quite dreadful-looking."

At this moment there was a flutter in the room and a shriek of fright—only a small shriek, like a little squeal.

The three Grawlies had come to tea, and had seen the baby. Syb had forgotten all about their dislike to babies when she asked the Grawlies to tea, to make a friendly bargain for the future safety of the cat.

The moment they saw the child they felt the horror which all Grawlies have of babies. So they put up their hands and fled in dismay.

They did not want to speak to the little girl any more, or to own half the cat.

* * * * * *

"My dear little Syb," said the voice of Miss Brown, "I don't know whether you are very tired, but you are very idle when you go to sleep in school."

Syb raised her head. Why, she herself had snored, and all the children had laughed. And Miss Brown was talking about caterpillars. It was that warm afternoon still, and the lesson "all about grubs and creep-crawleys."

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Electrical propulsion has been contracted for on the Erie Canal.

A safe-cracking machine has been found which seems to have been used in several Missouri burglaries.

A boy of 14 and a girl of 11 were recently married in Johnson county, Ga., with the full consent of their parents.

Nearly two thousand saloons will be closed up in Chicago in January, and the price of beer advanced about 25 per cent.

Water clocks were arranged on the principle of sand glasses, a certain quantity of water dropping through a small space in a certain time.

Private earthquakes are fashionable at Maine quarries. At Dodlin a few days ago a big blast threw a mass of rock weighing 1,300 tons a distance of 50 feet.

In the Norwegian town of Haugesund, which has a population of 6300, not a drop of spirituous liquor has been sold for 26 years. Many of the inhabitants have never tasted liquor.

The coloring of animals seen in Maine this season is something unusual. There have been white moose, milk white fawns, gray wolves, and there has recently been captured a pale yellow fox.

A Missouri farmer figured it out one rainy day that he had walked 300 miles in cultivating one acre of corn. He thereupon sold his farm and moved to town, where he walked 600 miles to find a job.

The River Platte during the summer is dry along the greater portion of its course. The water runs underground, only an occasional pool appearing on the surface. By digging almost anywhere in its course a supply of fresh, cool water may be obtained.

It is rumored that the infant child of Prince Adolphus of Teck has been pronounced blind for life. The Queen and the Duke of Westminster (the infant's grandfather), summoned specialists from far and near, but their verdict was that nothing could be done.

All the conductors, motormen and other employees of the Augusta, Ga., Street Railroad Company are going to visit the Atlanta Exposition at the company's expense. Their fares will be paid and their salaries will continue during their absence at Atlanta.

Several prisoners in county jails in Missouri committed minor offences in order that they might be boarded this winter at the county's expense. It is thought that if the prisoners were worked on county roads no such occurrences would have to be reported.

Mr. and Mrs. John Leake, of San Diego, Cal., both of whom are more than sixty years old, rode into Fresno, 400 miles distant, a few days ago, having traveled all the way on their bicycles. They were on their way to the Yosemite Valley, through which they will make an extensive tour.

The Yellow River is styled the "Sorrow of China." During the last century it has changed its course twenty-two times, and now flows into the sea through a mouth 300 miles distant from that of 100 years ago. It is estimated that its floods in the present century have cost China 11,000,000 of lives.

Immigration is increasing. The Chief of the Bureau of statistics reports that during this November 25,016 immigrants arrived at the ports of the United States, and in November of last year 18,311. During the eleven months ended November 10, 1895, the arrivals numbered 305,127, and during the corresponding period of the preceding year 234,301.

Hank, the yen of Kotahi, in Japan, has received a gift of $100 from the Government on account of the unusually exemplary behavior of the villagers. For over 200 years there have been neither quarrels nor lawsuits in the place, no crimes have occurred, the taxes have always been paid on time, and whenever misfortunes have come the villagers have helped each other without calling on the authorities.

Early last winter a man in Bucksport, Me., caught a young squirrel, put it in a cage, and made a pet out of it. The animal became very tame, and was permitted to have considerable freedom. It never seemed disposed to take to the woods again, so long as the cold weather lasted. But in the spring it disappeared. A week or so ago the squirrel returned and took up its quarters in the cage again.

Judge Campbell, of Mississippi, recently declared that the law against the carrying of concealed weapons should be abolished. He claimed that it operated to the injury of good citizens, who do not carry weapons; while the criminal not only carries a weapon, but knows that his victim is unarmed. A minister suggested a plan for overcoming the difficulty by prohibiting the manufacture of any fire arm shorter than three feet.

Professor N. S. Shales explains the good traits in the modern dog, as follows: The dog of the savage could not have been a cultured creature. When game was scarce the savage ate the dog. The strongest, or the most affectionate, or the most intelligent animals were spared. The weaklings, the cross, the stupid dogs went to the pot. "In this way," writes Professor Shaler, "for ages a careful, though unintended process of selection was applied to these creatures."

DECEMBER'S GIFTS.

BY R. B.

December brings the frost and snow
To whiten hill and valley low;
  Rare jewels, flashing bright and clear,
  To deck the woodlands lone and drear
Where mournfully winds come and go.
December brings the mistletoe
To glisten in the firelight's glow.
Friends home again from far and near
  December brings.

Sweet memories of long ago,
Of Him who came in want and woe,
  Of friends who dwell no longer here,
  Of friends estranged yet ever dear,
While Yuletide bells swing to and fro,
  December brings.

THE EARTH AND LIFE.

It seems to be worth while to collect together what may be said on the subject of the duration of life on the globe, viewed as a problem in physics, and this is the subject I propose to discuss in the present article.

Let it be understood that I am not intending to discuss, at present, the question in its biological aspect, at least, not more than by this allusion to the conceivability that there can be biological reasons for anticipating a termination to man's existence.

Returning, then, to the question as a problem in physics: The coal hoarded in the earth is the basis of our existing civilization, and this coal is being exhausted with reckless extravagance.

Of course, no one will contend that the exhaustion of coal means the end of the human race: man lived here for tens of thousands of years before he learned to use coal. We must also remember that there are vast stores of energy available elsewhere. The radiation from the sun, if it could be suitably garnered up, and employed both directly as heat, and indirectly as a source of power, would be quite capable of supplying all conceivable wants of humanity for ages.

It is also to be noted that we live on the outside of a globe, the inside of which is filled with substances that appear to have a temperature not less than that of molten iron. If the crust could be pierced sufficiently far, vast indeed is the heat that might be available.

It is a noteworthy fact the possibility of the continued existence of the human race depends fundamentally upon the question of heat. If heat, or what is equivalent to heat, do not last, man cannot last either. There is no shirking this plain truism. It is therefore necessary to review carefully the possible sources of heat and see how far they can be relied on to provide a continuous supply.

Of course it is obvious that the available heat generally comes from the sun. It may be used directly, or it may be, and often is, used indirectly, for nothing can be more certain than that it is sun heat, in a modified form which radiates from a coal fire in the drawing-room. The growing plant draws its carbon from the atmosphere, and the heat required to effect the decomposition of the carbonic acid is derived from sunbeams. When the carbon of the plant comes to be burned, it reunites with the oxygen of the air, and, in the act of doing so, evolves an amount of heat precisely equivalent to that which was obtained from the sunbeams. Apart from our wood and coal, there are many other materials capable of oxidation, and so of giving off heat in the process, and there is the interior heat of the incandescent globe, but from all these sources, only a definite number of units of heat are contained in the earth at this moment, and, as they are gradually diminishing, there is no supply of heat that can be relied on permanently. The same, too, is true of the heat which might be derived from the energy which the earth possesses by virtue of its rapid rotation, but the heat from this source also is limited.

Still the welfare of the human race is necessarily connected with the continuance of the sun's beneficent action. The few other direct or indirect sources indirect sources of heat which might conceivably be relied upon are, in the very nature of things, devoid of the necessary permanence. It becomes, therefore, of the utmost interest to inquire whether the sun's heat can be relied on indefinitely. If the sun ever ceases to shine, organic life on earth will be no longer possible.

And we may say once for all that the sun contains just a certain number of units of heat, actual or potential, and that he is at the present moment shedding that heat around with the most appalling extravagance.

Prof. Langley has calculated that although the coal fields of Pennsylvania are capable of supplying the United States for a thousand years, all the heat which the coal is capable of developing would not be equal to that which the sun pours forth in the thousandth part of a second. This energy, so copiously dispensed, is lost to our solar system. There is no form in which it is or can be returned.

It was long a mystery how the sun was able to retain its heat so as to continually supply its prodigious rate of expenditure. If it were a mere incandescent solid body dispensing its heat by radiation, the radiation of energy would profoundly affect the supply of sunbeams in the course of a couple of thousand years. It is to Helmholz that we are indebted for a true solution of the long-vexed problem. He showed that the sun is gaseous; and a gaseous globe, when it parts with its heat, observes laws of a different type from those which a cooling solid follows.

As the heat disappears by radiation, gaseous bodies contract much more than a solid body would do for the same loss of heat. The gaseous body does not necessarily lose temperature, although it is losing heat. Indeed the contracted globe may exhibit a temperature even hotter than before the heat took place.

But there is a boundary to the prospect of the continuance of the sun's radiation. As the loss of heat continues, the gases will first become liquid, then solid. In this latter state, radiation of heat will involve loss of temperature.

There is thus a distinct limit to man's existence on earth. Prof. Langley calculates that the original volume of the sun's heat would have sufficed to maintain its present rate of radiation for 18,000,000 years. Of this amount four-fifths are already exhausted. At all events it seems that, radiating heat at its present rate, the sun may hold out for 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 years more, but not for 10,000,000. R. B. S.

Grains of Gold.

When the heart is light with hope all pleases, nothing comes amiss.

Never turn a blessing round to see whether it has a dark side to it.

Much of the charity that begins at home is too feeble to get out of doors.

Where there is much pretension much has been borrowed; nature never pretends.

If you would never have an evil deed spoken of in connection with you, don't do one.

The beam of the benevolent eye giveth value to the bounty which the hand dispenses.

Sentiment costs more in dollars and cents than any other foolish thing in the world.

No man can be happy without a friend, nor be sure of his friend till he is unfortunate.

That which seemeth most casual and subject to fortune is yet disposed by the ordinance of Heaven.

The best way to discipline one's heart against scandal is to believe all stories to be false which ought not to be true.

Should any one ask me, what is the first thing in religion? I would reply, the first, second and third therein, nay, all, is humility.

He who in questions of right, virtue or duty sets himself above ridicule is truly great, and shall laugh in the end with truer mirth than ever he was laughed at.

Femininities.

She: I have heard that you said I was fond of the sound of my own voice. He: Well, you have yourself admitted that you like music.

King Leopold of Belgium is very fond of his briar pipe, and keeps his tobacco in the pagoda on the back of a bronze elephant on his library table.

Souvenir cows are the latest form of craze. It originated with the Empress of Austria, who brings home a cow from each place she visits.

Mother: That note-paper is certainly very quaint, but are you sure it is fashionable? Daughter: Oh, it must be. It's almost impossible to write on it.

He: But, my dear girl, there's nothing to be afraid of. And I thought you were so fond of animals, too. She: So I am; but I don't call a cow an animal.

He: Do you think blondes have more admirers than brunettes? She: I don't know. Why not ask some of the girls who have had experience in both capacities?

The Duchess of York has won the affection of everyone around Balmoral by her kindly manners and her willingness to have her little son go among the people.

"I cannot understand se language," said the despairing Frenchman; "I learn how to pronounce se word 'hydrophobia,' and zen I learn zat ze doctors sometimes pronounce it fatal!"

Mrs. Giddy: I wonder why those inquisitive people across the street are always looking into our window? Mr. Giddy: Maybe it's to find out why you are always looking into theirs.

Mrs. Strongmind: If women would only stand shoulder to shoulder, they would soon win the suffrage. Doctor Guffy: But, madam, that is something they can't do, with the present style in sleeves.

Mrs. S.: Why don't you go to work? Tramp: Please, mum, I made a solemn vow twenty years ago that I'd never do another stroke of work till women was paid th' same wages as men. (Gets a trifle).

Binks: Oh, yes, she carries herself like an empress, and bosses me around all she likes now; but wait until we are married, and then see how she'll fawn and cringe. Winks: To you? Binks: No; to the servant girl.

The highest salary paid to a governess is, probably that received by Miss Rose Hughes, English governess to the young Princess of the Asturias, a relative of the late Queen of Spain. Miss Hughes receives $5000 a year.

"Yes," said the girl, who makes collections, "it is one of the best autographs I have in my collection." "But are you sure it is genuine?" "Positive. I cut it from a telegram that his wife received from him with my own hands."

There are at present two Chinese girls who are studying medicine at the University of Michigan. One of them, Miss Shie, has been elected Secretary of the senior class. The ultimate object of these women is to return to China as Christian medical missionaries.

Bouttown: "This women's emancipation movement isn't such a bad thing, after all. I've been keeping company with Miss Strongsoul lately, and I rather like it." Upton: "In what way, particularly?" Bouttown: "Well, for one thing, she insists on paying her own expenses."

Miss Castique: "So you are engaged to that Mr. Atkinson, are you? Now, tell me honestly, what can you see in him that distinguishes him from all the other men in the world whom you have ever met?" Miss Passoo, with unlooked for frankness: "He asked me to be his wife."

"In a short biographical notice of Pope, which I compiled for an edition of his poems," said an author, "I briefly enumerated his prose works, among which I named his 'Memoirs of a Parish Priest.' When the proof came before me, I found that the compositor had set it 'Memoirs of a Paint Brush!'"

Hotel manager: "I see you have given our best suite of rooms to a man named Jones. Are you sure he can pay the price?" Hotel clerk: "Yes, sir. He is immensely wealthy." Hotel manager: "How do you know?" Hotel clerk: "Oh, he is very old and very ugly, and his wife is very young and very pretty."

Some one with a taste for figures has noticed the fact that Miss Braddon, the novelist, has in the thirty-three years since she began to write produced just sixty romances. Each of them is in three volumes, making 180 in all. She has, therefore, made copy enough for six printed pages on each day in all those years.

Mr. Slimpurse: I see the kitchen clock is not going. Didn't you get a key today? Mrs. Slimpurse: No, Mr. Slimpurse: I left you as you were going into a jeweler's. Mrs. S.: Yes, but Mrs. Stuckupp happened to be there looking at some pearls. You don't suppose I'd ask for a 5-cent kitchen clock key under those circumstances, do you? Mr. S.: What did you do? Mrs. S.: I asked how long it would take them to clean a diamond necklace, and came out.

Masculinities.

The man who bulls the market often finds that he is obliged to bear the loss.

King Humbert of Italy is a strong man, but his only son and heir is delicate.

Kaiser Wilhelm is an amateur artist, and takes to painting as a duck does to water.

John Adams was impulsive and irascible, but too much in earnest ever to be humorous.

In deference to her husband's views, the Duchess of York has discarded puff sleeves.

He.—Charlotte, I love you. You can not return my affection? She.—I'm afraid I'll have to, as I have no use for it.

A.—Is young Jameson improving in his violin playing? B.—I don't know. Either he's improving or we're getting used to it.

Benjamin Harrison is credited with having no sense of humor, although he does not object to a joke if the point is explained to him.

The late Count Dante Serego-Alighiero, who was Mayor of Venice and proved a very good one, was a direct descendant of the poet Dante.

Dumas' last play remains unacted, as it is such a savage attack upon Parisian journalism that no manager has had the courage to produce it.

He.—I observe my company is not agreeable to you. She.—How did you observe it? He.—By the clock. You've turned it forward instead of back!

It is said that in Warsaw, the ancient capital of Poland, there are 9000 noblemen who have been made such "for personal services to their country."

Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Parks, of Chesterville, Me., have just celebrated their golden wedding in the house where they have lived the entire fifty years.

The late Chauncey Goodrich died in the poorhouse at the age of 79. Twenty-five years ago he was a member of the Connecticut State Senate, and was worth $100,000.

What fools the girls are to marry! said a single lady of mature years. Very true, replied her married friend; but that is the only way to bring them to their senses.

Jinks, at the door, impatiently.—Are you all ready, dear? Mrs. Jonks.—All but putting on my bonnet. Jinks.—H'm! Well, I've time for two more cigars, anyway.

Young lady.—I should like to give my intended a little surprise before our marriage. What would you recommend? Lady Friend: Don't wear your false teeth, just for once.

Young man.—Gracie, what is it your father sees in me so object to, darling? Gracie, wiping away a tear.—He doesn't see anything in you; that's why he objects.

Five short autograph poems by Robert Burns were sold recently in London for $400, three long letters for $270, and three short ones for $105. At the same time seven letters of Sir Walter Scott were sold for about $7,000 apiece.

According to Le Figaro, during the 900 years that the Pekin Gazette has been in existence, 1800 of its editors have had their heads taken off for having exceeded instructions.

What part am I to take? said Chappie. You are to be the heroine's father, replied the stage manager. What does he do? asked Chappie. Manager—He dies ten years before the curtain rises on the first act.

The Duke of York always sports a grimy and badly burned piece of old briar of the cutty order, which he has smoked ever since the days when he was a midshipman, and the forbidden luxury could only be indulged in on the sly.

I can tell you, baron, that when my offer of marriage was rejected by the prima donna I was so utterly miserable that I was on the point of throwing myself out of the window. Baron.—What prevented you? Prince.—The height.

The Mayor of Coffeyville, Ky., issued a proclamation a few days ago, urging the merchants in that town to close their stores before 7 o'clock in the evening, so that they and their employees might attend revival services being held in the town.

He.—Madamoiselle, you are the star of the evening! Young lady.—You are the first to tell me so. He.—Then allow me to claim my reward as an astronomer. Young lady.—What do you mean? He.—That is to give my name to the discovered star.

The Emperor of Austria smokes so-called Virginia cigars, which, being manufactured of the rankest tobacco at Trieste, have straws running through them to make them draw, and are so green that they have to be held in a flame for several minutes to light.

Are you going out to-night, dear? said the husband to the emancipated woman. She.—I am. It is the regular weekly meeting of the lodge. He.—Then I want to say to you, and there was an unusual defiance in the mild man's tone—I want to say that if you are not at home by 11 o'clock I shall go home to my father.

Latest Fashion Phases.

There are so many dainty and stylish collars of fur that the average woman will put her money into one of them and freeze in it all winter, because there can't be any warmth in them, pretty as they are. The only safely useful cape is one that comes below the elbows and even that is not really warm, but it will do. Of course, the extreme flute and flare of the correct cape adds to its breeziness, for every wind is literally invited under the scallops. The collars must be very high and five pointed. The best quality of sealskin cannot be detected as such beside the very best quality of imitation seal, though some folk may feel it a comfort to have the "real thing," whether any one knows or not, while others will find it an aggravation to spend money on the real and get no more credit in its wear than does the wearer of the imitation. Women with short necks must beware of collars to their fur capes of marten, thibet or other shaggy fur.

Jackets cut rather short and of the same length all around are made with very baggy loose fronts, there being no shaping to the figure apparent from the front, the line seeming to be a straight one from under the arms. As a matter of fact, the entire front is set on like a box plait, and from the back the fitting into the figure under the arms is seen. Sleeves are all of the "melon" order—that is, they hang loose and are so full that they groove themselves in oblong folds that remind one somewhat of the long cantaloupe, while the whole sleeve is in outline like a very big and long watermelon.

A really undemonstrative hat may be made picturesque enough to satisfy the most triumphant belle by putting a flaring double ruffle along the edge made by the joining of the sides and top of the hat. This ruffle may extend all around the edge of the top, or it may flare gloriously right in front and narrow promptly to nothing at the sides, giving a helmet effect to the front. This addition of flares makes a hat lend itself at once to the droop of plumes and the array of audacities that makes a picture hat worthy of the name. The same effect in even greater degree is attained by setting a false top of velvet or brocade over the top of the hat, and allowing the former to extend in a flaring ruffle beyond the real top. This ruffle is then poshed up to accommodate the nodding heads of heavy plumes, or the glittering arch of a jeweled buckle, the edge of the brim is extended by a ruffled binding of material to match the false top, and the whole brim is bent out of shape. The hat is set on a head band of bright color, in which is tucked a knot of pendant flowers, under it all is set a girl who is, of course, just the right sort, and behold! the hat is at once lost sight of. One only realizes that she is looking at the prettiest girl in the world, who is wearing a something or other that makes her look very pretty.

The fashionable woman fairly revels in luxury this season, for all the modes are decidedly luxurious, and very poorly suited to slim purses. Velvets and furs, furs and velvets, seem to be the beginning and end of fashion's dictums, and oh, such costly furs. Ermine never was cheap, possibly because it is the fur of royalty, possibly because of its own worth, but it was always beautiful, and is so now: a fact most women realize and utilize to the best of their ability. An altogether charming cape, with long stole ends, is among the fur wraps of one of New York's beauties, and a very regal appearance she makes in its snowy beauty. The body of the cape is of rich olive green velvet extremely full and edged broadly with a rich embroidery placed flatly on it.

Over this flutters a deep butterfly cape of ermine, with a jaunty collar standing up about the face. One end of the cape is drawn over the bust, surplice fashion, or rather, in the style of the favorite fichus and from the waist fall two long tails of the fur, finished with a row of tails. A dainty ermine muff completes the set.

A ravissante gowns is made with a full flaring skirt of pale tan cloth, and is entirely void of ornament.

The snugly fitting bodice of geranium-pink glace silk is covered with ecru guipure lace. This bodice is enriched by a deep corslet of cloth, cut out in three points, which are laced together by bright pink silk cord, fastened on tiny diamond studs, which border each point. The shoulders are garnished with an epaulette of the lace mounted on silk. The collar-band is made of silk, with cloth collar points arranged on either side of the front. The skirt fastens over the bodice with two large diamond buttons at the back and front. The bouffante sleeve of silk has the lower sleeve covered with ecru guipure lace.

Another handsome gown is made of silver-gray peau de soie. The wide skirt, falling in many graceful folds to the foot, is embellished by a flight of butterflies in an applique of gray cloth, studded with steel paillettes, which are scattered over this attractive skirt.

The fitted bodice is cut in Louis Quinze style, and all the seams are outlined with the steel paillettes. In the front are artistic cascade revers, which open to reveal a draped vest of old lace. The deep black satin waist-band is ornamented with four Persian buttons. The black satin collar band is finished at the back with a lace butterfly bow. The leg-of-mutton sleeve is slashed at the wrist, and is trimmed with a ruffle of lace.

A stylish gown is made of mauve cloth. The full skirt is perfectly plain.

The belted bodice is plaited in at the front to puff slightly over the belt. A narrow vest and a pointed collarette are made of guipure lace, mounted on mauve silk. The gigot sleeve has a large pointed cuff of lace. The collar band is of mauve silk, with a fall of lace at the back. The silk belt has a small, flat bow at the back.

In skirts there are all manner of styles, from tremendously wide ones to the more reasonable and simply full ones. Some attempt is being made to bring back the trimmed skirt. The effort is showing itself now in the slashes up the sides, having different materials set in, and in the lace flounces there are draped on—sometimes very prettily if the wearer is not too short or fat. The present plain skirt is becoming to every one, and so such will be clung to for some time yet.

It is not easy to give up a style so universally becoming for one which will make a short person look so much shorter, and as short and medium sized people are in the majority, it is safe to say that the present skirt's days are not numbered—except with a good many figures.

When you stop to think of it, you almost wonder that ideas for new gowns were not exhausted long ago. We do, to a certain extent, run back along the centuries and pick from here and there a style. We sometimes don't even trouble to go back so far, but just take an idea from our great-grandmother's fashions—some of them so ancient and pretty.

However it is managed, we have a host of lovely things in the way of gowns to choose from now.

Such oceans of street, house, theatre, visiting and evening gowns! Enough to bewilder one.

A very pretty visiting or street costume is made of the greenish-black rough wool goods so popular just now. The sleeves are of a harmonizing shade of printed warp silk, they are long, reaching well over the wrists, and finished with a frill of the silk.

It has suspenders of rich looking Oriental guimp. The buttons are old coin—so quaint and odd. Around the throat a Marie Antoinette ruff, and a large picture hat of black velvet and feathers put the finishing touch to this exceedingly stylish gown.

A very handsome evening robe for house wear is made of ciel blue mousseline and trimmed with ecru lace. The skirt is gracefully full, and has a deep band of the lace around it, a foot or so from the bottom. The waist has a blouse tendency, and the slightly low cut neck is made in a sailor collar effect by the lace trimming.

The elbow sleeves are finished with a tiny band of lace, where they are gathered to ruffle.

Of the two waists we liked best, one is a white dotted Swiss, trimmed with a very light shade of ecru lace and white silk—the crushed collar and belt of the silk.

In buying white goods, such as Swiss, and white silk to go together, be sure that they harmonize, for it is a very easy matter to get two whites of this kind that they will be quite at war with each other.

Chameleon silk of a pink and Nile green tinge is the material of which the other waist is made. It has a low falling collar of the same goods, accordion pleated, and with a touch of cream lace at the edges.

The sleeves reach just to the elbow, and there is a twist of the silk around the waist.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, APPLES INCLUDED.

There is no fruit more thoroughly wholesome and digestive than the apple. We are all familiar with its good qualities when in the raw state, but it is doubtful whether or not many of us try various ways of cooking it.

There are scores of dainty and palatable dishes that are compounded with this luscious fruit, and the housekeeper who is willing to learn and anxious to become a culinary expert is always glad to hear anything that will assist her in this line.

Apple dumplings are a favorite dish in many households. To make them, make a crust of three cups of sifted flour, half a cupful of lard, a cupful and a half of butter, half a teaspoonful of baking powder, one cupful of water.

Cut the lard into the flour sifted with the powder. Mix into a smooth, firm paste with the water, and put it on the ice for twenty minutes. Roll the butter into the flour three or four times, making it quite thin.

Take eight apples, peel and core them and put one on each square of paste. These square pieces of paste should be about 4x4 inches. Fill the cored part of the apple with sugar and bring the paste together at the top. Sprinkle sugar over the whole and bake a half hour. Eat with a hard sauce.

A good pie is made by using the same as that for dumplings. Line a deep dish with the paste, slice a dozen apples, add a cupful and a half of sugar and some nutmeg and cover with the paste. Place in a saucepan half full of boiling water and bake.

Apple Fritters.—Make a batter of three eggs, three tablespoonfuls of flour and sufficient milk to make into a thin batter. Take six good-sized cooking apples, peel, core and cut into rings. Soak in a little spiced and sweetened wine for an hour, heat some butter in a frying pan, dip each ring of apple separately in the batter and fry a nice brown; sift over with powdered sugar, and serve very hot.

Compote of Apples.—Bake slowly eight large pippins till thoroughly cooked, take the pulp and add sugar, allowing half a pound to one pound of pulp and boil until it becomes stiff, stirring all the time, when done, pile high in the centre of a dish. Take three sponge cakes, slice them and place round the apple with a teaspoonful of apricot jam on each; pour custard over the whole.

Apple Marmalade (for dessert).—Peel and core some good apples and boil them with sufficient water to prevent them burning; beat to a pulp, and to every pound of pulp allow three quarters of a pound of lump sugar. Dip the lumps into water, throw them into a pan, and boil till the syrup is thick and can be well skimmed; then add it to the apple pulp, with a half-teaspoonful of lemon juice, and stir over a hot fire for about twenty minutes, or until the apple ceases to stick to the bottom of the pan. Then pour into small jelly molds, previously dipped in water. Stand on ice, or in a cool place, and when turned out stick over with blanched almonds.

Apple Solid.—Dissolve half an ounce of isinglass in half a pint of water and strain it. Pare and slice a pound of apples, and set over the fire with ten ounces of sugar, the rind of a lemon and a glass of sherry. When reduced to a pulp rub them through a hair sieve, beat half a pint of cream to a froth and stir it into the apples, with the juice of a lemon, over the fire, add the dissolved isinglass and stir around for three or four minutes. Turn it out to cool, still stirring; then pour into a mold that has been dipped in water and leave for twelve hours.

Stewed Apples and Jelly.—Take six very large apples, peel, and with a scoop take out core and part of apple, being careful not to split. Place the apples in a stew pan, with equal parts of wine and water to cover them, adding a little sugar and cochineal; stew until quite tender, carefully remove, and place on the dish they are to be served in; stand aside till cool. Then fill the centre of each apple with lemon jelly; take the syrup the apples were stewed in and boil till reduced to one-half, flavor with lemon, and when cold pour round the apples.

Apple Snow.—Peel and grate one large sour apple, sprinkle over it a small cupful of powdered sugar as you grate it. This will keep it from getting dark. Break into this the white of two eggs and beat it all constantly for half an hour. It will be very stiff and light. Heap it into a glass dish and pour a smooth, sweet custard around it.

Baldness is either hereditary or caused by sickness, mental exhaustion, wearing tight-fitting hats, and by over-work and trouble. Hall's Renewer will prevent it.

THE DYING BODY SUPPLIED WITH THE VIGOR OF LIFE

THROUGH

DR. RADWAY'S Sarsaparillian Resolvent

Every drop of the Sarsaparillian Resolvent communicates through the Blood, Sweat, Urine and other fluids and juices of the system the vigor of life; for it repairs the wastes of the body with new and sound material. Scrofula, Consumption, Syphilis, uncured and badly treated Venereal in its many forms, Glandular Disease, Ulcers in the Throat, Mouth, Tumors, Nodes in the Glands and other parts of the system, Sore Eyes, Strumous discharges from the Ears, and the worst forms of Skin Diseases, Eruptions, Fever Sores, Scald Head, Ringworm, Saltrheum, Erysipelas, Acne, Black Spots, Worms in the Flesh, Tumors, Cancers in the Womb, and all Weakening and Painful Discharges, Night Sweats, Loss of Sperm, and all wastes of the Life Principle are within the curative range of this Wonder of Modern Chemistry, and a few days' use will prove to any person using it for either of these forms of disease its potent power to cure them. If the patient, daily becoming reduced by the wastes and decomposition that are continually progressing, succeeds in arresting these wastes, and repairs the same with new material made from healthy blood, and this the Sarsaparillian will and does secure, a cure is certain, for when once this remedy commences its work of purification and succeeds in diminishing the loss of wastes its repairs will be rapid, and every day the patient will feel himself growing better and stronger, the food digesting better, appetite improving and flesh and weight increasing.

Nebraska City, Neb.

Dr. Radway & Co., Dear Sirs: I presume you find most physicians opposed to using proprietary medicines, and I am one of them to a certain extent. But when I find a prepared medicine that will do and accomplish the desired work for which I want it, I do not hesitate to prescribe and use it; and allow me to assure you we have found your Remedies to be very useful and have used and prescribed them quite extensively during the past three years and shall continue to do so, so long as we find good results by so doing. Please allow me also to say that I have been practicing medicine for 53 years, so you perceive I should be (by actual experience) competent of knowing what good results are by using your Remedies.

D. P. NEIHART, M. D.

St. Hyacinthe, P. Q., Canada.

To Dr. Radway—Dear Sir: I account it little sacrifice, indeed, to allow you to publish my letter with regard to Scrofula, after the cures I have been able to effect by following scrupulously your system of treatment.

I again affirm what I spoke of in my last note, and I could recount to you several other cases of different maladies being cured by your system, though the one of Scrofula is by far the most remarkable, and was, in fact, looked upon by many as nothing short of a miracle.

I am your obedient servant,

RANDOLPH McINTYRE, M. D.

IT INCREASES THE FLESH.

Mrs. B——, from a continual drain on her system, wasted away from 165 pounds to 75 pounds in the course of 14 months. She had used barks, iron, sulphuric acid, quinine and many of the much vaunted nostrums of the day, as well as all kinds of injections, and still grew worse. She commenced the use of RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT. In one month she gained in weight 10 pounds. Day after day she witnessed an increase of flesh and decrease of waste of Leucorrhœa. In two months she was entirely cured of the Leucorrhœa, and in six months had gained FIFTY POUNDS IN WEIGHT. She is now in the possession of health and beauty. Let all sick ladies take the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

SKIN DISEASES, HUMORS AND SORES

There is no remedy that will cure the sufferer of Salt Rheum, Ring Worm, Erysipelas, St. Anthony's Fire, Tetters, Rash, Pimples, Blotches, Prickly Heat, Ache and Sores, Ulcers, Boils, Humors of all kinds, so quick as the SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT. Let it be tried.

THE MOST ECONOMICAL IS THE BEST!

One bottle contains more of the active principle of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in teaspoonful doses, while others require five or six times as much. Sold by druggists. Price $1.

Send to DR. RADWAY & CO., 55 Elm Street, New York, for Book of Advice.

Misjudged.

BY S. U. W.

IT had been one of George Wesley's whims to buy the ruinous old manor house, which he had stumbled across just as it was passing under the auctioneer's hammer, and to fill it with a party of his most particular friends, chief among them his chum Dick Herbert and Miss Fairleigh.

With the latter came a girl friend and the devoted old nurse who had watched over her from babyhood—for the Fairleighs would never have spared the flower of their flock without the attendance of faithful Nurse Morton.

The two girls were to share the same room, and chattered as only girls can, as they laid off their wraps and prepared for the evening.

"What a queer old room!" said Elsie. "See those great black cornices, and the griffins' heads over the mantelpiece! One would think that the spirits of the old Hampshire aristocracy who ruled here once possessed them when the shadows go flickering over like that. What are you thinking of to give you such a look, Marjorie?"

"Thinking how the spirits would be shocked if they were looking down here now. I know this place very well. This was the chamber of state, and even within my recollection it meant something to be installed in it. My mother was laundress for the family, and I often came with her when she brought home the clothes."

Nurse Morton gave her head an impatient jerk.

"That girl is always a throwin' of her low origin into people's faces," she muttered to herself. "She mayn't be good enough for the place, but my Miss Elsie is, and so I'd like to tell her."

Elsie's friendship for Marjorie Denton would have been patronage in any one less gentle; but she was careful to assert her friend's claims wherever she went.

And Miss Denton undoubtedly made a great sensation, for before many days had passed the two fast friends were drifting into a rivalry which had Marjorie Denton for its object.

There was this difference: George Wesley was a willing subject from the first, while Dick, possessed of antagonisms and prejudice, fairly wondered at himself.

She was not the type of woman he admired; there was something in her self-sufficiency and the courses she had mapped out which detracted from the sweetness of womanly perfection in his eyes.

He did not become better satisfied with himself as the days went on, and was starting out one morning for a long tramp among the hills, in an endeavor to get rid of his restlessness, when he met Miss Denton unexpectedly, following the path to the village.

"I'm going to see my mother," she answered of his look of surprise. "Will you come along and make her acquaintance, Mr. Herbert?"

He went.

"If there is anything in her low connections to check this unwilling infatuation of mine let me have the benefit of it, by all means," he thought, savagely.

And yet he was shocked when a gaunt and withered old woman stood forth to welcome them.

But, in spite of himself, he admired her bravery and filial duty, though not the defiance with which the qualities were manifested.

A week of rain followed—rain which penetrated the moss-grown roof, and came in ghostly drips through the cracked plastering, until, as a sequel, there was a grinding and rending of the walls one night, as if the old house were in the throes of dissolution.

There was a crashing fall, a girl's wild screams, and George Wesley sprang out to meet Elsie Fairleigh, in a panic of terror, flying through the corridor.

"Marjorie!" she gasped, and fainted outright, sinking down at his feet.

It was but the work of a moment to pick up the prostrate form, carry her through the corridor, and consign her to Nurse Morton's charge, while he returned to discover what had happened.

A great patch of plastering had fallen, bringing with it a section of the heavy cornice, and Marjorie Denton had been stricken down by this, and lay amid the debris, with her black hair dabbled in a stream of blood that trickled from a gaping wound above her temple.

Wesley was put aside by an impetuous hand at the instant his horrified gaze was arrested by this sight.

"Good Heaven! It was enough to kill her. Water and bandages here, Wesley. Your mother or sister will be of more use here than you."

Dick Herbert lifted her as he spoke, and compressed the edges of the wound to stop the bleeding.

Something more than the shock of her danger came to him in that moment—something that was a realising sense of what life would be without her.

It turned the scale and decided him.

Before this he had questioned the suitability of such a wife as she would make him; he had shrunk after that visit to the village, and all but resolved to cut the thread of his fancy at any sacrifice; now he determined to take her in spite of all obstacles, and mould her to meet his desires.

George Wesley's arrival was scarcely a straw in the way of his will, yet all the others in the house had thought her kinder to his rival than to himself.

That was the secret of Nurse Morton lying in wait for her in the corridor, one evening, after Miss Denton was able to rejoin the rest.

George Wesley had been singing to her a passionate love song, which brought a significant smile to the lips of disinterested listeners, but drove all the color out of Elsie Fairleigh's flower-face.

It was rather a drooping face, these later days, yet no one read the secret of that gentle heart save the faithful old nurse.

"And I've made up my mind to tell you, Miss Denton, that it's a shame and a piece of ingratitude, if it's nothing else. 'Taint for me to say all you owe her, as you wouldn't have a chance to rob her of her rights if she was as bold as some, and didn't just stand out of your way herself—"

"Rob Elsie of what?" demanded Marjorie, as the other choked between wrath and grief.

"Of Mr. Wesley—him that was always coming to sing his songs to her afore you wiled him away, and she's that forgivin' she would let her heart break afore you should know the truth at all. But you've a harder heart nor, I think if you can do her such a wilful wrong, Miss Denton; and anyway, I've got it off my mind, do what you will."

What that might be Majorie gave no sign, and Nurse Morton went away presently, half fearful that she had betrayed her darling's secret into ruthless hands. That it was not so the next twilight's revelation showed:

"Elsie," said Majorie, then, "do you remember the prediction you made when I settled upon entering the law?"

"That some man would care for you too much before that time came to let you sacrifice yourself? It needed no gift of prophesy to be sure of your winning powers."

"Well, the man has come, and I have promised to marry him."

A smile answered bravely to Elsie's will. She had foreseen this too long not to be prepared when it came.

"I am very glad," she said. "It is Wesley, of course?"

"My dear child, what an idea! It is Dick Herbert, of course. Mr. Wesley's fancy was previously engaged, if I am not mistaken."

The earth rocked a little under Elsie's feet. There were revulsions of joy quite as powerful as those of despair, and the transition came to her in a glorious burst.

It was three years later before her joy was fully realised, but they were happy years, during which George's heart went slowly back to his first love, and found a rest there which had not belonged to that summer's fitful passion.

Neither Elsie nor he had seen much of Herbert and his wife, but now there was to be a reunion. Elsie would be married in the autumn, and meanwhile everything that could make her last days in the old pleasant ones was being done.

She looked forward to her meeting with Marjorie as the greatest of these pleasures, yet when it came something was lacking from the fullness of her joy. It may have been the tender sympathy of divining that Marjorie's happiness was not complete.

"But she is more beautiful than ever," said Elsie, enthusiastically. "She used to appear like a princess in disguise, but she is like a reigning queen now."

"Handsome is as handsome does," quoted Nurse Morton, sententiously. "Miss Marjorie never could hold a candle to some others, in my opinion."

One thing at least was certain, Marjorie was not a submissive wife. There were word flashes between her husband and herself, and often open defiance to his wishes, that never failed to bring an ominous cloud to Herbert's brow.

Nurse Morton watched and waited and begged without giving reasons that Elsie would keep her lover by her side; she laughed and let him go. And then the guests began to notice he was very much in Mrs. Herbert's company.

One evening after dinner he called out to Herbert.

"Here, Dick, take Elsie in charge until I join you. I have promised to see a friend off by the train, but I'll be with you afterwards."

"I will," said Herbert briefly.

George Wesley left the house and walked briskly along a lane for half a mile, where was a light carriage in which Mrs. Herbert was seated.

"You are sure we shall be in time?" she asked.

"Quite sure."

"Drive fast. I don't feel safe in having eluded Herbert's vigilance yet. I would as soon meet my death warrant as my husband now."

She tried to laugh, but the vivid color was stricken out of her face, and the breath on her lips changed to a curious gasp.

A thrill of pitying tenderness went through Wesley's heart.

"Was it so bad as that, Majorie? Forgive me, then, if I have shown any reluctance—"

Whatever more he said was lost in the rattle of the wheels, and a figure which had seemed to Marjorie to take on her husband's shape faded into the shadows that were left behind.

There was a block of vehicles that detained them on the way, and when they reached the station Wesley dropped the reins over the splashboard and sprang hurriedly down.

"There is not one moment to lose," he said. "There is your train just going to start, but we can make it by a run."

She had risen in his place; then, looking beyond him, seemed frozen where she stood.

He turned involuntarily, and in a surge of passing faces saw but one—that of Herbert, fixed in a stern intensity of passion, threatening and merciless.

The next instant, in the panic which possessed her, Marjorie grasped at the fallen reins. There was a gate open before them, and the horse, answering to the cruel curb, dashed through it upon the network of metals.

Wesley cried out in horror, but he was put aside now as he had been once before by the other's masterful hand.

"Back! She is mine! You are not to come between us!"

The horse had shied. The carriage was swaying frightfully, and Marjorie had turned in it to look back.

With his eyes fixed on that pale, white face, her husband bounded forward, and, just as he reached her, the thunder of an incoming train shook the rails; its iron wheels crushed the carriage to splinters, and the human victims had no time given to realise the fate which had come upon them.

Wesley groaned and covered his face with his hands to shut out the dreadful sight.

It seems like a horrible dream to which he roused himself, when he set about performing the duty he owed to the living and the dead. His first thought when he reached the manor was to seek his betrothed.

Elsie, haunted all the evening with indefinable terrors, had this greater terror to sweep them for ever away; but as she clung to him, she felt the love in Wesley's eyes that were so pitiful for their doom.

It was no time to speak of the faults or mistakes of those two, whatever their differences in life may have been, who had met death together. But as Wesley stood telling her brokenly how it had happened Elsie seemed to see it all—the pride of the one and the rebellion of the other, which was better explained in a little note left by Majorie for her husband's eyes, to say that as she found she could never please him she must return home to her mother.

What if Marjorie had been misjudged by all?

There were tears in her eyes as Elsie's hand stole into her lover's.

It is hard to reconcile the high meridian of life with the grave. It was hard that their rest should come beyond it while hers was here—happy rest! in the love which she never would doubt again.

Webster's International Dictionary

Specimen pages, etc., sent on application.

Successor of the "Unabridged."

Invaluable in Office, School, and Home.

WEBSTER'S INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY

Standard of the U. S. Gov't Printing Office, the U. S. Supreme Court, the State Supreme Courts, and of nearly all the Schoolbooks. Warmly commended by every State Superintendent of Schools.

THE BEST FOR EVERYBODY

BECAUSE

It is easy to find the word wanted.
It is easy to ascertain the pronunciation.
It is easy to trace the growth of a word.
It is easy to learn what a word means.

G. & C. MERRIAM CO., Publishers, Springfield, Mass., U.S.A.

LADIES RELIEF—Safe, Sure and Reliable; Failures unknown. Cures all womb troubles. Guaranteed. For particulars address The Elec ro Chemical Battery Co. Richmond, Ind. Lady agents wanted.

$100.00 Given Away Every Month

to the person submitting the most meritorious invention during the preceding month. WE SECURE PATENTS FOR INVENTORS, and the object of this offer is to encourage persons of an inventive turn of mind. At the same time we wish to impress the fact that

It's the Simple Trivial Inventions That Yield Fortunes

—such as De Long's Hook and Eye, "See that Hump," "Safety Pin," "Pigs in Clover," "Air Brake," etc.

Almost every one conceives a bright idea at some time or other. Why not put it in practical use? YOUR talents may lie in this direction. May make your fortune. Why not try!

Write for further information and mention this paper.

THE PRESS CLAIMS CO.

Philip W. Avlrett, Gen. Mgr.,
618 F Street Northwest,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

The responsibility of this company may be judged by the fact that its stock is held by nearly two thousand of the leading newspapers in the United States.

ESTABLISHED 1890. OPEN DAY AND NIGHT

STANDARD

Detective Agency

SECRET SERVICE.

40, 42 & 44 N. CLARK ST. SUITES 5, 6 and 7. **CHICAGO, ILLS.**

Reliable Service rendered in any part of the world. Civil and Criminal cases attended to, searches for missing people instituted, habits of employees and members of family ascertained, lost and stolen property recovered.

Shadowing a Specialty, Guides, Watchmen and Custodians Furnished.

Confidential, Reliable and Reasonable.

Telephone North 182 **A. L. STANDARD, Gen. Mgr.**

Humorous.

AN OLD TALE VERSIFIED.

"Before thou speakest once, think always thrice!"
A father to his son gave this advice.
The boy, although of disposition wild,
Was, nevertheless, a most obedient child,
And promised the advice to take.
Just then it happened that the worthy sire,
Warming himself, with back to fire,
A sudden movement made; his coat-tails graze
The burning coals, and soon are in a blaze,
Though he, scarce more than half awake,
Perceives it not. The son, his lesson clear
Before him, cries, "Father, I think!"—"My dear,"
The father says, "thought is the mind's best food!"
The boy 'gain cries, "Father, I think!"—"'Tis good!
"What is the thought," return'd the sire,
"That doth now occupy your youthful mind?"
"Father, I think your coat's on fire behind!"
"Scoundrel! why spoke you not before!"—"I would,
But 'thrice think 'fore once speak,' you said I should;
And so I granted your desire!"
—BELFRAGON.

Light timber—Sunbeams.

A pair of slippers—A pair of skates.

The bus that crossed the ocean—Columbus.

When a pickpocket pulls at your watch, tell him plainly that you have no time to spare.

Why does a person that is poorly lose much of his sense of touch?—Because he doesn't feel well.

"Well, I'm out of pocket by this transaction," murmured the watch as the pawnbroker took charge of it.

Briggs has a faculty for getting things cheap. The other day he had a beautiful set of teeth inserted for nothing. He kicked a dog.

What is the difference between a reddish horse and a horse-radish?—About as much as exists between a house-lock and a leaky house.

The count: Ah, mees, you climb ze Matterhorn? Zat was a foot to be proud of.

She: Pardon me, Count, but you mean feat.

The count: O-o-h! You climb it more zan once?

Bacon: That lawyer you recommended is not a man of his word.

Egbert: Why not?

Bacon: He told me I could talk freely to him, and look at the bill he's sent me!

Violinist, proudly: The instrument I shall use at your house to-morrow evening, Mein Herr, is over 200 years old.

Parvenu: Oh, never mind that. It is good enough. No one will know the difference.

"Monsieur Karr," said the chairman of a convivial party, at which Alphonse Karr, the delicate Parisian author, assisted, "you have not proposed the health of any one." The poet rose and proposed "The health of the sick."

Trolley car conductor: Pay your fare or get off.

Dignified Philadelphian: What do you take me for, sir?

Trolley car conductor: Fi' cents, same as everybody else!

"Johnny," said an old gentleman, "can you cypher in two syllables?"

"Yeth, thir—and spell in the rule of three all day long."

"Smart boy. Now see if you can tell what a pint of snow will come to at one halfpenny a yard."

An Irish ostler was sent to the stable to bring out a traveler's horse; but not knowing which of the two strange horses in the stalls belonged to the traveler, and wishing to avoid the appearance of ignorance in his business, he saddled both animals, and brought them to the door. The traveler pointed out his own horse, saying—

"That's my nag."

"Certainly, yer honor, I know that very well," said Pat; "but I didn't know which was the other gentleman's."

When a soldier is confined in the guard-room for an offence a written copy of the crime is invariably handed to the commander of the guard. The other day a non-commissioned officer and a party of men were told off for a certain fatigue. The corporal having an order, one of the men seemed disinclined to obey, when, after rebuking him sharply, he shouted in angry tones:

"It's a good job for you, me lad, that I can't spell insubordination, or I'd shove you in the 'clink' (guardroom) sharp."

A stranger walked into an hotel the other day, and after registering asked the clerk if he could have room No. 8. The clerk looked at him curiously, and asked him why he preferred that room.

"Why, I have some important matters that I wish to meditate and reflect over."

"But what has that got to do with the number of your room?" persisted the inquisitive clerk.

"Oh, it's sort of appropriate, don't you see? I wish to have room 8 because I wish to ruminate."

"H'm!"

A FACETIOUS JUDGE.—A mirth-loving judge, Justice Powell, could be as thoroughly humorous in private life as he was fearless and just upon the bench.

Swift describes him as a surpassingly merry old gentleman, laughing heartily at all comic things, and at his own droll stories more than aught else. In court he would not always refrain from jocularity.

For instance, when he tried Jane Wenham for witchcraft, and she assured him that she could fly, his eye twinkled as he answered, "Well, then, you may; there is no law against flying."

When Fowler, Bishop of Gloucester—a thorough believer in what is now-a-days called spiritualism—was persecuting his acquaintance with silly stories about ghosts, Powell gave him a telling reproof for his credulity by describe a horrible apparition which was represented as having disturbed the narrator's rest on a previous night.

At the hour of midnight as the clocks were striking twelve, the Judge was roused from his first slumber by a hideous sound. Starting up, he saw at the foot of his uncompanioned bed a figure—dark, gloomy, terrible, holding before its grim and repulsive visage a lamp that shed an uncertain light. "May heaven have mercy on us!" tremulously ejaculated the bishop at this part of the story.

The judge continued his story:

"Be calm, my Lord Bishop; be calm. The painful part of this mysterious interview has still to be told. Nerving myself to fashion the words of inquiry, I addressed the nocturnal visitor thus—'Strange being, why hast thou come at this still hour to perturb a sinful mortal?'

"You understand, my Lord, I said this in hollow tones—in what I may almost term a sepulchral voice."

"Ay, ay," said the Bishop, "I implore you to go on. What did it answer?"

"It answered, in a voice not greatly different from the voice of a human creature, 'Please, sir, I am the watchman on beat, and your street door is open.'"

THE WAITER.—When the late Oliver Wendell Holmes was in England in 1886 he found himself on one occasion at a "crush" in London amongst a great mass of people, including several royal personages. He sat quietly in a corner, but presently, feeling a little faint, and observing refreshments in the distance, he turned to an elderly personage standing near, whom he supposed to be a butler or something of the kind, and asked for a harmless beverage. The supposed servant brought this with great alacrity, and remarked, "I am very glad to meet you, Dr. Holmes."

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table was a little taken aback, and the stranger added, "I am Prince Christian." "Dear me," said Holmes, alive at once to the joke—"I have not had much acquaintance with princes; and, do you know, I took you for the waiter!" At this Prince Christian went off into a burst of merriment. "Where is my wife?" he said. "I must tell her that. She admires you immensely!" Off went Prince Christian to fetch the Princess, and the genial American philosopher was soon the centre of a circle of royalty, greatly delighted by the incident.

Colds
Coughs and
Bronchitis
Cured by Taking

AYER'S
Cherry Pectoral

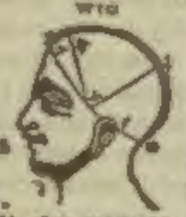
Awarded
Medal and Diploma
At World's Fair.

Use Ayer's Hair Vigor for Color.

DOLLARD & CO.,

TOUPEE

1223
CHESTNUT ST.
Philadelphia,
Premier Artistes
IN HAIR.


WIG

Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG, ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE, and Manufacturers of Every Description of Ornamental Hair for Ladies and Gentlemen.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.	FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.	No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 2.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.	No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.	No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold a Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 23, '93. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, or Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do no know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS.
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.
1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING. LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.
None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

Reading Railroad.

Anthracite Coal. No Smoke. No Cinders.

On and after Nov. 17, 1895.

Trains Leave Reading Terminal, Philada.

Buffalo Day Express, Parlor and Dining Car, Buffalo and Chicago Exp. Sleeping Cars. } daily 9.00 a m; daily, 6.23 p m, 9.45 p m } Pittsburg, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Chicago.

Williamsport Express, week-days, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00 p m. Daily (Sleeper) 11.30 p m.

Lock Haven, Clearfield and Du Bois Express (Sleeper) daily, except Saturday, 11.30 p m.

FOR NEW YORK.

Leave Reading Terminal, 4.10, 7.30, (two-hour train), 8.30, 9.30, 11.20 a m, 12.50, 1.30, 2.35, 5.00, 6.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night. Sundays—4.10, 8.30, 9.30 a m, 12.30, 6.10, 8.25 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night.

Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 2.55, 8.08, 9.10, 10.18, 11.14 a m, 12.57 (Dining car), 2.38, 3.45, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m. Sunday 2.55, 8.08, 10.18 a m, 12.14, 2.45, 6.12, 8.10 (dining car), 11.45 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.30, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 8.45 10.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 6.05, 8.00, 9.00 a m, 1.00, 2.00, 4.30, 5.30, 6.33, 9.45 p m. Sundays—6.27, 8.32, 9.00 a m, 1.0a, 4.20, 6.33, 9.45 p m. (9.45 p m, does not connect for Easton on Sunday.)

FOR SCHUYLKILL VALLEY POINTS.

For Phœnixville and Pottstown—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.42, 11.05 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.22, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30, 11.26 a m, 6.00, p m.

For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 12.45, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.42 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.22, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30 a m, 6.00 p m.

For Lebanon and Harrisburg—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 7.30 a m.

For Pottsville—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00, 6.00, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.42 a m, 1.42 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 6.00 p m.

For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.00 a m, 4.00 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.00 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves: Week-days—Express, 9.00, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00, p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.30, 6.30 p m. Sundays—Express, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.45 p m.

Parlor Cars on all express trains.

Brigantine, week-days, 8.00 a m, 4.30 p m.

Lakewood, week-days, 8.00 a m, 4.15 p m.

Detailed time tables at ticket offices, N. E. corner, Broad and Chestnut streets, 833 Chestnut street, 20 S. Tenth street, 609 S. Third street, 3861 Market street and at stations.

Union Transfer Company will call for and check baggage from hotels and residences.

I. A. SWEIGARD, General Superintendent. C. G. HANCOCK, General Passenger Agent.

BOOKKEEPING SIMPLIFIED. (WAGGENER'S.) Mailed on receipt of price, $1.00. Send for Circular. C. R. DEACON, Publisher, 227 S. Fourth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

PLAYS Dialogues, Speakers, for School, Club and Parlor. Catalogue free. T. S. DENISON, Pub. Chicago, Ill.

FREE TO BALD HEADS.

We will mail on application, free information how to grow hair upon a bald head, stop falling hair, and produce a fine growth of whiskers and mustaches.
P. Lorrimer & Co., Baltimore, Md.

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE TO THE PIANO OR ORGAN

Anyone knowing a tune, say "Way Down on the Swanee River," either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC, IMMEDIATELY correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. Postage stamps, 2's, taken. Address—

THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.,
726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

"I wept when I was born, and every day shows why," said A House-keeper — who did'nt use SAPOLIO

Sapolio is a solid cake of scouring soap used for all cleaning purposes

"Ah! Ah!" Cried the Housewife, "The Secret I know, no DIRT can resist SAPOLIO."

"Oh! Oh!" Cried the DIRT, "At length I must go, I cannot withstand SAPOLIO."